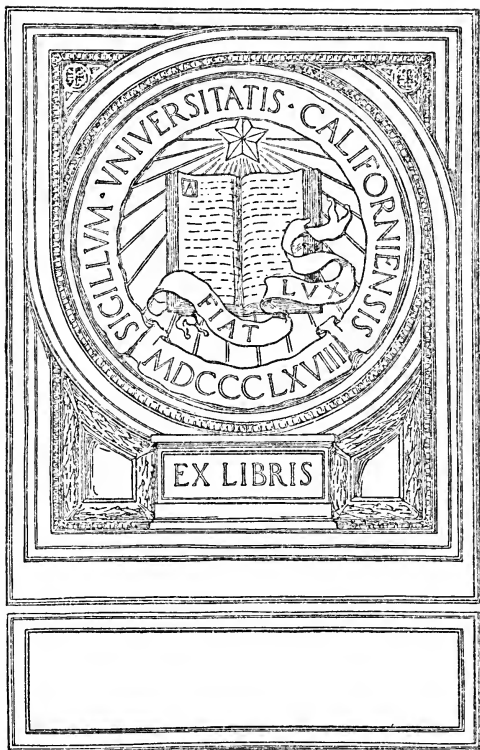
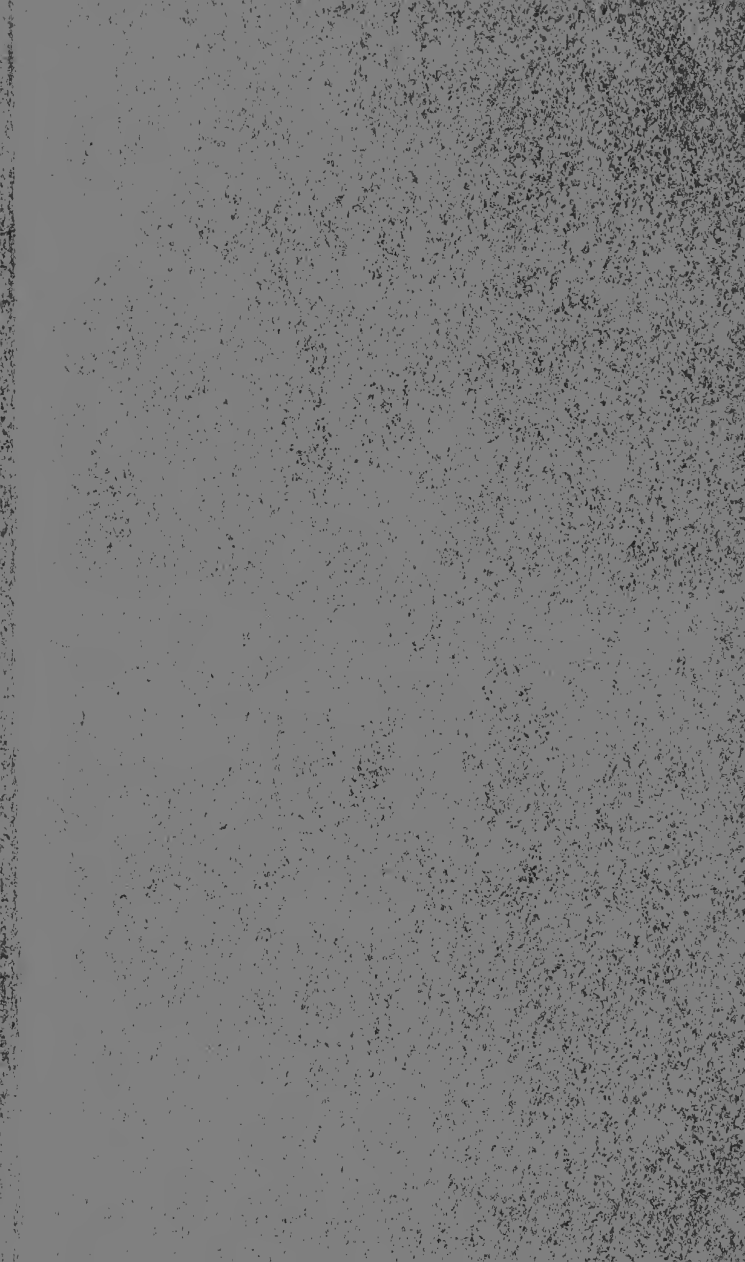




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- AUSTRALASIA** . OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS  
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- CANADA** . . . . THE MACMILLAN COMPANY OF CANADA LTD.  
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# THE SOCIAL WORKER AND MODERN CHARITY

BY

WILLIAM FOSS

LATE GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE BRADFORD CITY GUILD OF HELP

AND

JULIUS WEST



ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK  
SOHO SQUARE, LONDON, W. 1914

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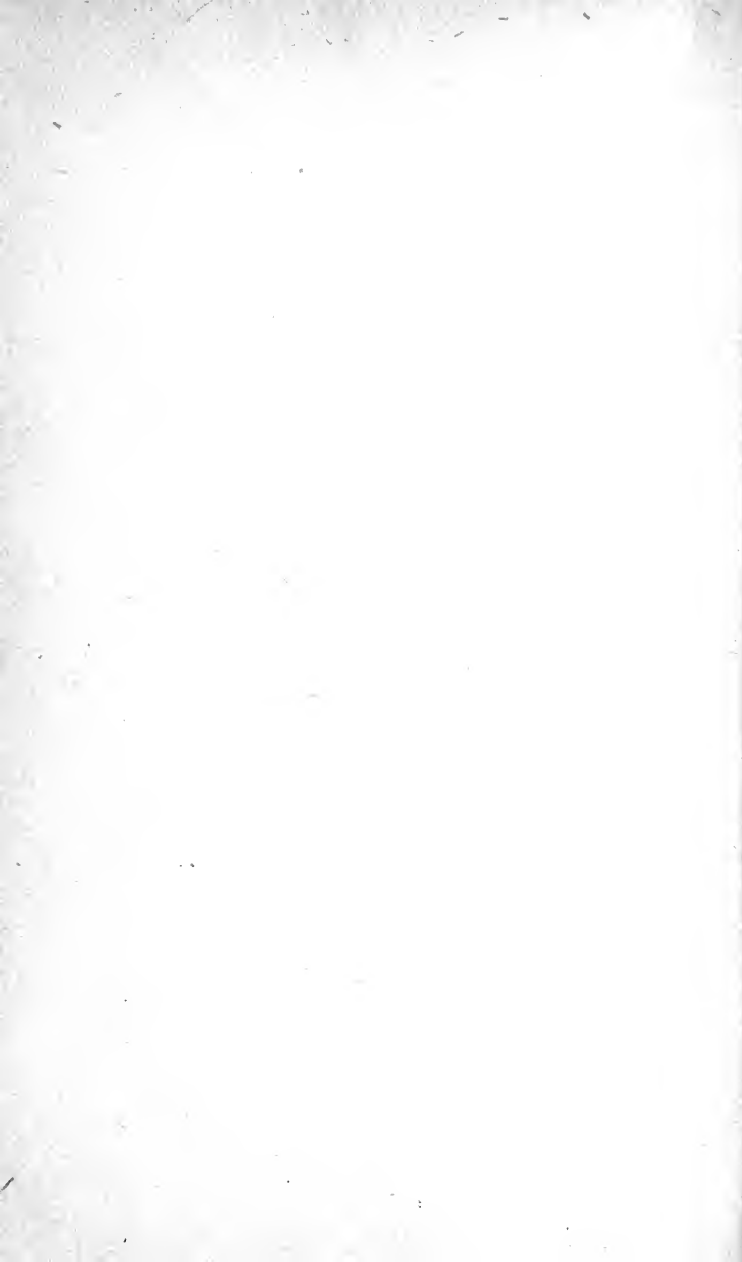
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“THOUGH many men are nominally entrusted with the administration of hospitals and other publick institutions, almost all the good is done by one man, by whom the rest are driven on ; owing to confidence in him, and indolence in them.”

DR. JOHNSON.



## INTRODUCTION

DEAR STEPHEN,

It is the least that we can do to dedicate this book to you, if only for the admirable way you have worked with one of us in the cause of charity at Bradford. There is no problem more difficult than deciding the proper sphere of the social worker. There are so many people who are anxious and willing to undertake the very highest of effort in the cause of charity, but in our day at least every new movement is believed to be a step of progress. This, of course, is not true. We could wish it were so, for in writing this little book we have almost come to believe that the difficulties surrounding the co-ordination of all social effort are almost as involved as the social problem itself. This book is an honest attempt to guide the social worker through the labyrinth of wasted effort, and at the back of it all there remains Kirkman Gray's definition of the social worker as the "perfect agitator."

"He is, as it were, an explorer in the unmapped world of the ideal life, from whence he brings back

news of an unreachèd good, such tidings as sound like 'travellers' tales' in our ears, but which haunt the minds of men until they seek to verify the story by a practical policy calculated to transform the actual. Only it must be observed that the most daring speculator cannot move very far from his base, and the wildest Utopia is determined by the conditions of its year of publication."

This book is dedicated to you in the hope that it may achieve half the good that your wise and kindly spirit will, for sure, influence the practical actions of any charity you may assist.

Yours ever,

J. W.

W. F.



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# THE SOCIAL WORKER AND MODERN CHARITY

## CHAPTER I

### THE PSYCHOLOGY OF CHARITY

THE difficulties which beset the would-be charitable person are manifold. There are many to whom the signing of a cheque and the occasional receipt of balance-sheets or annual reports are not sufficient to convey the entire conviction of an accomplished social duty. To these, as well as to their less fortunate, but equally philanthropic brethren, the call of personal service is at once real and a necessity. But agencies are numerous, and even the so-called "idle rich" have little time to investigate the relative merits of the countless different schemes, systems, and authorities which clamour for their practical sympathy. This very variety attracts people away from practical work and the philosophic consideration of the most pressing problems of the moment. Intentions convert themselves into academicism and a single "cause" assumes the importance of the whole social problem. Attendance at lectures and arid meanderings through Blue Books

soon come to occupy the entire attention of the best-willed student, and his energies are sapped by the irresistible conviction that nothing is being actually accomplished.

At the same time there are vast numbers of persons eager to undertake and capable of valuable "field work" who at present waste their valuable time and excellent service by lack of perspective, by a lack of co-ordination, for which no amount of practical devotion will compensate. The problem is nowadays too complicated for any single-handed effort to be even partially successful. The days of Dr. Chalmers<sup>1</sup> are over, never to return. The questions to be met are not one, but many; but a single ideal must permeate any deliberate attempt at influence for good. The task of helping to transform the underfed and sickly dwellers of the slums into men and women of which the country may be proud, can only be achieved after the consideration of the causes which lie at the roots of the social problem. With these we are not concerned; we merely wish to see the present wastage of admirable charitable effort at an end, so that whatever alleviation or improvement can be procured should not be dissipated by overlapping or

<sup>1</sup> *Chalmers on Charity*, Prof. Masterman.

*The Social Ideal and Chalmers's Contributions to Christian Economics*, by Dr. Harper.

*Problems of Poverty*, by Dr. Chalmers. Nelson: 1s. net.

ignorance. The method alone is the *motif* of this book, but only by the consideration of that method and by the effects of its application can a real conception of the causes be attained. It will be our purpose to present a brief outline of the agencies which are to-day calling for the voluntary co-operation of the social worker, to describe their work, and their *raison d'être*. The work of existing public authorities will be outlined, and its relations with the work of private charitable bodies will be surveyed. No book can take the social worker round the slums: they are ever to hand, but this book does set out what he can do when he gets there.

. . . . .

“6th January 1914.

“DEAR MRS. ———,—Since I have been in ——— I have come in contact with much distress in the City, largely due to the shortage of employment.

“My heart has been touched by the condition of so many children ill-fed and badly clad. As my husband has been invited to be Parliamentary Candidate it is only right that I should try to make myself useful in ———. I am getting together some of my old underwear and some old clothes of my children, which I hope may be acceptable to some poor mothers and their children.

“Could you give me a helping hand by sending me any warm old clothes or stockings or boots? I will undertake the personal distribution of the things in the poorer districts of the town. I would be so glad of your aid.—Yours truly,

“—————.”

This letter, the original of which we have in our possession, is an extreme illustration of what we regard as false charity. We do not propose to lay down the rule that it is wrong for a parliamentary candidate's wife to try to win favour in his constituency, but we emphatically deny that a woman who believes that the gift of old clothes is a remedy for unemployment has any conception of the real meaning of the social problem or charity.

It is this false spirit of charity which this book sets out to combat. In the instance we have given, the motive is frankly interested and charity is being used as a means to an end. But putting that aside, there is the germ of a too prevalent idea that the various phases of the problem are easily divided into watertight compartments. It is ridiculous to hold that the problem of unemployment can be solved and the question of drunkenness left to itself. But the voluntary worker requires the stimulus of attained results. The only real solution of any problem is hidden far down the ages that are to come, and there is nothing more difficult for the worker to steel himself against than the alarming fact that there may be no visible results at the end of his toil.

It will be necessary, then, to lay down some rough conception of what is meant by charity for the

purposes of this book. It will be found throughout that the term is used in its broadest sense and in no way derogatively to the recipient of that charity. It is used as a generic term to cover the efforts made by the Government, local authorities and the more happily placed people to alleviate and assuage the poverty of their less fortunate fellow-citizens. Later on in this book a warning is issued against the spirit which too often actuates the giving of this charity. It need only be pointed out here that the unfortunate position of any one requiring the assistance of charity is not itself a position of degradation. The situation of any member in any community is so largely one of chance that it is of the highest importance that the nineteenth-century prejudice against Poor Law relief should be shown up and given its necessary quietus. It is, of course, a thing to admire, this "proud spirit of the poor," which the last President of the Local Government Board so thoroughly understands, but a heroic impulse becomes pathetic when that heroic spirit prevents a man from obtaining the necessary nourishment to render him valuable as a citizen of the State. Shorn of its romance it becomes almost a criminal action wilfully to depreciate the "human capital" of the State for a romantic whim, and such a state of affairs is only possible in a community which bases its standard of values upon monetary considerations.

In this book there will be no advocacy of any particular school of politics. To enter such troubled regions as these would be only to confuse the issues which we have set out to make clear. Social reform is supposed to be a problem which urgently besets each of the political parties. Every type of propagandist claims to be the one possible saviour, the only possessor of the panacea of the social problem. It is of course true that all political parties must seek to achieve some settlement of this question, for it is merely axiomatic that the problem of the nation is entirely the problem of the people who live in that nation. But at the same time it must be pointed out that politicians as a class are largely ignorant of and strangely unmoved by the problem which the social worker deals with every day. This may of course arise from the difference of perspective, but it is not too cynical to suggest that in some cases it is because the representatives of the people in Parliament are not cognisant of the state of affairs which happen in this country or in others, that they definitely represent that numerous class who believe that "God's in His heaven; All's right with the world!" Against these, of course, must be set the very many honourable examples to the contrary. For the social worker it is of vital importance to put aside the vexed question of politics and trust to the disinterested authorities



(some of which are politicians) to assist them in solving the greatest of all problems.

To sum the social worker up as succinctly as possible; he may be described as a person who, having the eyes to see that the state of his country is capable of great improvement, has also the heart and the head to serve in bringing about a more desirable state of affairs. This sentiment may be influenced by a thousand different reasons, but the best of these is the realization of the fact that in a State every life is so dependent upon every other life, that there is no logical distribution of chance, opportunity and money, and that the well-being of the State exists not only by the well-being of a small number of those inhabitants but by the general welfare of every member of that State. And the general welfare of the community does not rest upon the distribution of doles, but upon the uprising in each man of the consciousness of his own importance to himself and to the community.

## CHAPTER II

### THE HISTORY OF CHARITY : TO 1601

As the State develops so must charity change its form. The modern organization of the State, with its centralized government and democratic control, has only been made possible by the growth of the possibility of communication, rapid and secure, between all the geographical parts of the State. Before the advent of the railway, a county court, as constituted to-day, would have been unthinkable. Local government and, still more, that idea of collective responsibility in one another which utilizes the local government of the country for its own purposes, is something quite new. The social worker, who, for example, is concerned with children, and does his share by serving on a Care Committee or endowing a dental clinic, as the case may be, is an equally new arrival, connected with his or her ancestor in the domain of philanthropy, the mediæval monk or nun, only by the most attenuated of spiritual pedigrees. We need not trace the history of charity to its very beginnings ; charity is as old

as mankind. We propose, however, to draw a brief outline of the history of philanthropy in England in order to illustrate the gradual widening of philanthropic activities, and the accompanying movement of the State. [The philanthropist is like the little mountain stream which rises rapidly, and gives the starting impetus to the river. The river in the parable is the State, which is always set in motion by private enterprise, and which seeks to imitate it.] So we shall find that poor relief, education, the feeding and doctoring of children, the care of prisoners, lunatics and the sick, have all been taken over by the State from private hands. But not, we emphatically assert (for here is a point of frequent error), to the exclusion of private charity. The social worker's field of action widens far more rapidly than the State's. Every one of these State agencies needs the reinforcement that only volunteer effort can supply.

In the Middle Ages, as now, it was commonly believed that giving to the poor was all that constituted charity. Abbot Gasquet gives a few examples of what promiscuous almsgiving at monasteries amounted to in practice.<sup>1</sup>

Many abbeys and monasteries used to fulfil their charitable duties by giving doles at regular stated times to all comers, or to a fixed number of appli-

<sup>1</sup> *Henry VIII. and the Dissolution of the Monasteries.*

cants ; this indiscriminate doling out, either in money or kind, had effects precisely similar to those that the casual granting of out-door relief to all applicants would have to-day. Hospitality was a means whereby a mediæval philanthropist might be of benefit to wanderers ; sanitary considerations had little weight in those days. Giving money to the poor, directly and with no questions asked, was held to be a Christian duty ; and he who gave his money to the poor, gave to Christ. The very existence of the Mendicant Orders illustrates the peculiar state of society.

The guild system in its later stages evolved a very complete method of mutual aid against sickness, widowhood, etc., but it is doubtful if this ever affected the larger part of the population. The feudal system, which to us appears so watertight and self-sufficing, had its share of social problems. Moreover, there was always sickness to be contended with. Up to the days of the Stuarts, there were few who could confidently expect to have fresh meat throughout the year. Fish-curing was not properly understood from the very first. Fruit and vegetables were few. Pure water was by no means so accessible as it is to-day. Sanitary science was not even in its infancy. Doctors had but the vaguest notion of what the inside of the human body was like. Medicines were empirical and occasionally of ex-

treme gruesomeness. The sum of all these features of everyday life was that disease was rampant. Leprosy and scurvy were common, and other terrible illnesses which are to-day unheard of, prevailed throughout all Europe. And in 1348-49 came the Great Plague. This, probably a form of cholera, originated in China, swept across the civilized world, and finally came over to England and destroyed about one-third of the entire population. Then the social problem arrived, and charity had its strongest impetus.

The shortage of labour and the wholesale destruction of family ties led to demands for higher wages which a whole series of Acts of Parliament could not suppress; and to a great many people "taking to the road," and becoming vagrants. Here again legislation failed, principally because its enforcement was impossible. The monasteries were kept busy attending to the demands of the thousands who had thrown themselves upon them for succour, and numerous hospitals were established. The next step in the creation of the problems of to-day was the Inclosure of Common Lands. This began soon after the Great Plague had made it impossible to continue the old methods of cultivation on the same scale. Food was the prime necessity, and when the lord of the manor fenced in a large piece of pasture land that had previously been used in common for

a number of purposes, he was able to start sheep-farming. By the reign of Henry VIII., England was a vast sheep-run. This, too, accelerated the rural depopulation and intensified the social disorder. The burden upon the monasteries grew.

We see, therefore, that little by little the monasteries had come to bear the whole weight of relieving the destitute. At the coming of the Tudors many of them had become wealthy corporations. At a time when the clergy exercised a power far and away beyond what they wield to-day, when the Church was yet a body in which Nonconformity was all but unknown, when the offices of priest and almsgiver were one, it was but natural that the monasteries should benefit by an enormous number of bequests. Moreover, "gifts to the Church for charitable or other purposes, were made in free, pure and perpetual alms,"<sup>1</sup> which meant that such bequests were free from taxation and all secular jurisdiction. In spite of their heavy duties, therefore, the monasteries accumulated wealth more quickly than they distributed it.

In 1534 came the dissolution of the monasteries. Henry VIII. made his rejection of the papal supremacy the excuse for the suppression of the chief supporters of the papal dogma. Moreover, there was much immediate profit to be gained in so doing,

<sup>1</sup> C. S. Loch, *Charity and Social Life*, p. 281.

and Henry and his commissioners had the gratification of knowing that they were at any rate acting in the interests of morality, for many of the monasteries had lapsed sadly from the ideals of their founders. In March, 1536, Parliament passed an Act dissolving the smaller monasteries; Cromwell had already taken the larger ones in hand. All the moveables, lands and income of the monasteries were swept into Henry's purse by the most drastic confiscatory act of which the history of our country bears mention. In 1538 the friaries were attacked, and by 1539 practically all the religious houses in the country had passed from the hands of their former holders.

Nor was this all that was done to wreck the principal engines of public assistance. In 1547, Somerset confiscated the property of the guilds.<sup>1</sup> We need not enter the ancient controversy between Professor Ashley<sup>2</sup> and Archdeacon Cunningham as to whether, as the former believes, the whole, or, as is the view of the latter, the greater part, of the property of the guilds was confiscated. This did not apply to London. Here the guilds were sufficiently wealthy to have engineered a revolution if any attempt to deprive them of their property

<sup>1</sup> See Cunningham, *Growth of English Industry and Commerce*, vol. i. p. 522.

<sup>2</sup> See *Economic History*, I. ii. 145.

had been made. A period of decadence had set in for the guilds as much as for the monasteries, but, nevertheless, much harm was done by their suppression.

The immediate result of these acts of confiscation was the creation of a large class of vagrants. Bands of beggars came into existence.<sup>1</sup> The financial policy of Henry VIII., which included the encouragement of sheep-runs, and the debasement of the currency, was all to the same effect. As far back as 1518, the citizens of London had been drawing up "orders with the object of repressing vagrants and controlling charity, but after the dissolution of the monasteries they found it necessary to refound and reorganize the greater part of the existing system of relief."<sup>2</sup> In fact, it became necessary to invent a scheme, applicable to the economic and administrative conditions of the time, to relieve poverty through the State. Henry VIII. had, of course, not wrecked the whole structure of philanthropy. St. Thomas's and St. Bartholomew's Hospitals remain in London to this day from the thirteenth and twelfth centuries. Both, by the way, had been suppressed by Henry VIII., but enjoyed

<sup>1</sup> The effects of the Wars of the Roses, which displaced large numbers of the rural population by causing the consolidation of large estates, should not be forgotten.

<sup>2</sup> R. M. Leonard, *The Early History of English Poor-Law Relief*, p. 2.



a speedy resurrection. And, as might well be supposed, the early Poor Law was indeed a tentative and ineffectual series of efforts, undertaken on the initiative of the principal towns. In London, the Common Council of the City decreed the establishment of a public granary in order to steady the fluctuations in the price of corn. This was supposed to lower the cost of living, but does not appear to have had any appreciable effect. Regulations were enacted in large numbers for the benefit of vagrants. Whipping was to be administered, and only *bona fide* impotent beggars were to be permitted to beg. But these measures, of course, contained no guarantee that the needy would be helped, and so their results were nugatory. The next invention was more permanent. It was, in fact, the poor-rate.

This, too, did not come at once. Collections in the City churches for the upkeep of the hospitals had been made compulsory, but had proved insufficient for their maintenance. So in 1547<sup>1</sup> it was decreed that the citizens and inhabitants of the City of London were to pay a "half-fifteenth" for their hospitals, but this was for one year only.

But the authorities hesitated in believing that relief could be obtained except as almsgiving. The technique of the present day, both in regard to private giving and public assistance, had

<sup>1</sup> R. M. Leonard, *op. cit.* p. 29.

yet to be elaborated. The eleemosynary method was in practice the only method known to the Tudors. In 1552, Parliament passed an Act "that valiant beggars, idle and loitering persons, may be avoided, and the impotent, feeble, and lame provided for, which are poor in very deed." The Act then directs<sup>1</sup> that in every city, town, and parish, a book shall be kept by the parson, vicar or curate, and the churchwardens, containing the names of the householders, and of the impotent poor; and that the mayor and head officers in towns, and the parson and churchwardens in every parish, shall yearly, in Whitsun week, "openly in the church, and quietly after Divine Service," call the householders and inhabitants together, and shall elect and appoint two able persons or more to be collectors of the charitable alms of the residue of the people for the relief of the poor. And the Sunday next, or Sunday following, when the people are at church, the said collectors shall gently ask and demand of every man and woman what they of their charity will give weekly towards the relief of the poor, and the same is to be written in the same book. And the collectors shall justly gather and truly distribute the same charitable alms weekly to the said poor and impotent persons, without fraud or covine, favour or affection, and after such sort that the more impotent

<sup>1</sup> Sir G. Nicholls, *History of the English Poor Law*, vol. i. p. 133.

may have the more help, and such as can get part of their living have the less, and by the discretion of the collector to be put in such labour as they be able to do; but none are to go and sit openly begging, upon pain limited to the aforesaid statute. If any person, being able, shall obstinately and frowardly refuse to give towards the help of the poor, or wilfully discourage others from so charitable a deed, the parson and churchwardens are gently to exhort him, and, if he will not be so persuaded, then the bishop is to send for him, to induce and persuade him by charitable ways and means, and so to take order according to his discretion. No person elected or nominated to the office of collector is permitted to refuse to execute the same for one whole year, upon pain of forfeiting twenty shillings to the alms box of the poor. And the collectors are to account quarterly to the town and parish authorities, at which accounting "such of the parish as will may be present."

Here, then, is a system in embryo of public assistance on a voluntary basis. Nobody, it will be seen, is to be assessed; people are only to be "gently" exhorted to contribute. This Act of Parliament was re-enacted with amendments (but without change of principle) twice in the reign of Mary. A good deal of ineffective social legislation took place, which need not concern us here.

Private charity at the time also generally took the line of bequeathing money gifts, although a few enlightened donors provided schools and almshouses in preference to endowing annual distributions on their graves, or to starting funds to give "poor maids" fourpence on marrying. The most important piece of social legislation of the reign of Queen Elizabeth was the Statute of Artificers, 1563, which was an attempt to deal with the problem of unemployment. Apprenticeship was made compulsory. Justices were empowered to fix the rate of wages (it was made a punishable offence to pay a labourer more than the wage fixed). It was expected that this would at any rate secure a sufficiency of agricultural labour, but this was not to be the case. In 1575, yet another "Act for the Punishment of Vagabonds, and for the Relief of the Poor and Impotent," was passed, showing how useless its predecessors had been. But the drastic treatment here prescribed for all beggars and vagabonds, as well as for those who housed or relieved them, had no greater degree of success. The importance of this Act lies in the clauses that follow. Justices of the Peace were ordered to make "diligent search and enquiry of all aged, poor, impotent and decayed persons, born within their said divisions, or which were there dwelling or living by alms within three years preceding, and make a

register-book containing their names ; and when the number of such poor people shall thus be truly known, the Justices are to appoint, within every their said several divisions, meet and convenient places to settle the same poor people for their habitation and abidings, if the parish within which they shall be found does not provide for them. And the Justices are also required to ascertain what the weekly charge for the relief and sustentation of the said poor people will amount to, and by their good discretion to tax and assess the inhabitants dwelling within the said divisions to such weekly charge as every of them shall contribute, and to appoint persons to collect and gather the same, and make delivery thereof to the said poor people as the Justices shall appoint; and they are likewise required to appoint overseers of the poor, to continue in office for one whole year; and if a person so appointed shall refuse to serve, he is to forfeit ten shillings.”<sup>1</sup>

This last clause is of the utmost significance. The appointment of *overseers* (who are with us yet in rating assessments) and their power to assess, meant that private benevolence had failed and the State had been forced to step in, to supply both the administration and the funds. We have not exhausted the provisions of this important Act,

<sup>1</sup> Nicholls, *op. cit.* vol. i. pp. 159, 160.

which contained clauses about licensing deserving poor people to beg, and enforcing the collection of poor relief. The levying of a rate is the point of greatest importance.

In 1576, the failure of all previous legislation led to the establishment of the workhouse. In its primitive form this meant that the Justices of the Peace may in general sessions appoint and order a competent stock of wool, hemp, flax, iron, or other stuff, to be provided by taxation of all the inhabitants within the several limits. "The said stock is to be committed to the custody of such persons as the mayor, bailiff, or other head officers of the cities and corporate towns may appoint, and in other places to such persons as shall be appointed by the Justices." The persons so appointed are to be called "the collectors and governors of the poor," and they are empowered "with the advice of them that do appoint them," to order and direct the division and manner of working of the said stock, so as that every poor and needy person, old or young, able to work, standing in necessity of relief, "shall not for want of work go begging, or committing pilferings, or living in idleness." Instructions are then given as to the manner in which articles so made are to be disposed of. If any person refused to work he could be imprisoned in a "house of correction." Even this was of no avail. Sumptuary

legislation and laws dealing with combinations of workmen made matters no better.

Only by 1601 did the lawgivers of England realize that the relief of destitution by means of charity on one hand, or repression on the other, was impossible. In that year the Poor Relief Act was passed, and it remains to this day the corner-stone of English Poor Law legislation. Even so it was only enacted as a temporary measure. But it was renewed at the beginning of the reign of James I. and Charles I., and in 1641 it was made perpetual. We need not give extracts from the Act. It reaffirmed all those principles laid down in the preceding Acts which survived. These are summarized in the Majority Report of the Poor Law Commission, as follows: <sup>1</sup>—

1. Parochial chargeability.
2. Repression of begging, except where authorized.
3. The provision of employment as a means of assistance.
4. The care of the lame, the impotent, the old and blind, who are poor and are unable to work.
5. The setting to work and apprenticeship of children.
6. The free use of the house of correction for the idle and the petty offender.

<sup>1</sup> P. 57, large paper edition.

It was in this way that the Elizabethan legislators defined the meaning of charity, extended its scope and operation, and for the first time formed the connection between voluntary charity and the State. For, as the late B. Kirkman Gray so ably pointed out, in those days the Poor Law was a form of charity in the eyes of the law. The poor were the heritage of the monasteries, to be dealt with as the monasteries dealt with them, from no theory of human rights, but because voluntary gifts to the poor were held to be at least as beneficial to the giver as to the taker. The increase of poverty after 1539 had caused this view to be revised; the modern scientific view of charity had not yet come to take its place.



## CHAPTER III

### A HISTORY OF CHARITY (1601-1834)

DR. C. S. LOCH's valuable historical study, *Charity and Social Life*, contains a chapter headed "Charitable Movements after 1601." It is significant that this contains no references to charities established privately during the seventeenth century. In 1601 the Statute of Charitable Uses was passed to safeguard gifts and bequests. This contained a list of the objects for which money might be bequeathed, and is, in fact, an official list of the charities of the day. We therefore quote it. Gifts, etc., were permitted "for relief of aged, impotent and poor people, some for maintenance of sick and maimed soldiers and mariners, schools of learning, free schools, and scholars in universities, some for repair of bridges, ports, havens, causeways, churches, sea-banks and highways, some for education and preferment of orphans, some for or towards relief, stock or maintenance of houses of correction, some for marriages of poor maids, some for supportation, aid and help of young tradesmen, handicraftsmen and

persons decayed, and others for relief or redemption of prisoners or captives, and for aid or ease of any poor inhabitants concerning payment of fifteens, setting out of soldiers, and other taxes."

Kirkman Gray's acute comment<sup>1</sup> on this is: "A reading of this preamble suggests two lines of reflection. Break up this interesting medley, and classify the objects for which men at that time bequeathed their goods. It appears that some have become obsolete: others are now provided for without any recourse to charity. The Government had already accepted a concurrent responsibility for its maimed soldiers and sailors, who are thus left to the dual care of the nation and of benevolent individuals." Such as it is, however, this preamble illustrates, perhaps better than any document of the time, current opinion as to charity at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Stow, in his *Survey of London*, has a lengthy chapter, "Honour of Citizens and Worthiness of Men in the Same," which is in effect a long list of London charities, established, for the most part, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Some of these, indeed, to sophisticated modern eyes appear in a very different light from that in which Stow saw them. "Robert Fabian, Alderman, and one of the Sheriffs, 1494, gathered out of divers good authors, as well Latin as French,

<sup>1</sup> B. Kirkman Gray, *History of English Philanthropy*, p. 35.

a large Chronicle of England and of France, which he published in English, to his great charges, for the honour of this city and common utility of the whole realm." We have too many authors among us to-day, who publish at their own expense, to regard this as an altogether praiseworthy piece of charity. But, on the whole, the list in the preamble contains no object of charity that had not been receiving attention in previous years. Kirkman Gray, who is practically the only authority on this period, found that under the influence of the Puritan Party many theological lectures and sermons were endowed. Often the terms of the endowment contained much human nature. One woman of Shoreditch endowed an annual sermon; the preacher was to receive 10s., the congregation 20s. for their attendance! The captives of Algiers, who were the victims of pirates, etc., also became a recognized object of charity. The sufferers from plague formed another such object, and the philanthropic erected occasional pest-houses, and did what they could to alleviate the sufferings of the sick and secure proper burial for the dead. The Civil War caused a set-back to philanthropic effort by draining the country of its spare cash. But the same cause which led to the decrease of charity was also responsible for an increase of distress. Hence, "the closing years of the seventeenth

century are among the most important in the history of philanthropy." "The Great Fire of London, in 1666, had got people into the way of putting their hands into their pockets for the common good, and the habit was not dropped when a new London had arisen from the ashes." "Chelsea Hospital for soldiers was founded in 1682, and Greenwich Hospital for sailors in 1694." Many important schools date from this period: Aske's Haberdashers' Schools—of which London now contains four—were founded in 1690. Kirkman Gray points out that so varied had charities grown, that a deliberate attempt at specialization in philanthropic work seems to have taken place. Large numbers of religious societies sprang up: the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, born in 1698, is with us yet. The practice of charity was vigorously inculcated by the whole body of Church of England clergy towards the end of the seventeenth century, and so made its mark upon the history of the eighteenth.

The efforts which were to have the most far-reaching effects were those directed to the education of the children of the poor. This synchronized with the downward shifting of the centre of gravity of the ages of those employed in industry, for reasons which may be found at length in any industrial history of England. During the eighteenth

century, child-labour became an important factor in production. The efforts of the philanthropists were directed to remedy the most pitiable results of this system. Their work was largely intended to counteract, by religious teaching, the vicious consequences of evil surroundings. It was soon supplemented by the establishment of Sunday Schools, about 1780, by Robert Raikes and others. Work-house schools were also introduced, in great part through the devotion of private individuals. Still, education moved slowly. Joseph Lancaster did not publish his first pamphlet on the subject until 1802, the year which also saw the formation of the Sunday School Union, and the passing of the first Factory Act, which restricted, or was intended to restrict, the labour of women and children in factories. Soup kitchens arrived about 1780.

During the first half of the eighteenth century the great London hospitals<sup>1</sup> came into existence on the back of this great wave of individual effort for the social good. Westminster, Guy's, St. George's, London and Middlesex Hospitals were founded, and during the same period a number of special hospitals first saw the light. The provinces followed enthusiastically in the wake of the metropolis. During the second half of the century the impulse continued in

<sup>1</sup> With the exception, of course, of St. Thomas's and St. Bartholomew's.

full strength. A reaction set in against the inhumanity of the time with regard to its treatment of prisoners, convalescents, illegitimate children and orphans. This energy, however, bears witness both to a genuine philanthropic sentiment and to the failure of the State to deal with many of the most pressing problems of the time. The Elizabethan Poor Law had not been a success. The seventeenth century had left things much as they were. "As regards Poor Law, the eighteenth century was one of experiment and criticism."<sup>1</sup>

The principal Poor Law legislation that affected the intentions of the charitable during the eighteenth century consisted of two Acts of Parliament, of 1722 and 1782. The former established a work-house test. "Parishes, either singly or in combination, were empowered to provide houses and contract with any persons 'for the lodging, keeping and maintaining, and employing' of poor persons, and 'to take the benefit of their work, labour and service.' And 'no poor who refused to be lodged and kept in such houses should be entitled to parochial relief.'" The immediate result was a diminution of expenditure, which, however, proved in the end to be illusory. The Act of 1782 ("Gilbert's Act") was, in fact, an attempt to remedy the previous Act, which seemed to have increased

<sup>1</sup> Majority Report of Poor Law Commission, pt. iii. sec. 13.

both expense and suffering. "Power was now given to adjacent parishes to unite by voluntary arrangement into a Union or Incorporation and build a workhouse for the combined parishes. And the 29th section provided that no persons should be sent to such poorhouse except such as were become indigent by old age, sickness or infirmities, and were unable to acquire a maintenance by their labour, . . . and orphan children. For the able-bodied the Guardians were ordered to find employment near their own homes. . . . The Justices were to appoint and control visitors and paid guardians; and by these visitors and guardians Poor Law relief was to be administered. Under this Act sixty-seven Incorporations were formed, and their disinclination to come under the new Poor Law was one of the chief obstacles which the Commissioners of 1834 experienced." The enactment of "stipendiary philanthropists" by Act of Parliament will be noted. Poor relief, however, continued to increase. The cause was not in the administration, but in the internal convulsions of changing conditions of industry, and in the great strain of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. In 1700 less than £1,000,000 was being spent on poor relief. In 1832 the figure stood at over £7,000,000. Then the great Commission of 1832 was appointed, and in 1834 its classic Report was produced.

The Report of 1834 contains much that is paradoxical. What it condemns in theory it perpetuated in practice. It consolidated all the evils of Poor Law legislation of the eighteenth century while professing to revolutionize them. It condemned the general mixed workhouse in the strongest possible terms, and in the end established it on a firmer basis than ever. It recommended the well-known principle of "less eligibility" which the central Poor Law authority has ever since adopted with enthusiasm outwardly, while making furtive efforts to disclaim it in every piece of Poor Law legislation considered during the last three-quarters of a century.

In dealing with the history of charity it is virtually impossible altogether to avoid the discussion of this scheme of State aid. And yet there was probably never a scheme drafted which contained fewer direct incentives to philanthropic effort.

A scheme which contained the following statement, and is, in fact, based upon it, is scarcely calculated to bring into operation such energies as might appreciably raise the lot of the indigent. "The first and most essential of all conditions, a principle which we find universally admitted, even by those whose practice is at variance with it, is, that his situation on the whole shall not be made really or apparently so eligible as the situation of the independent labourer of the lowest class."



This recommendation, made at a time when a man's wages were frequently no more than ten shillings a week, was obviously unworkable, and few parishes made strict and continued efforts to keep to it in the letter. Yet it was from this false premise that a whole series of apparently valid syllogisms was launched. As it was, the Commissioners believed that the system they were attempting to initiate might secure the co-operation of much voluntary service. They say: "Where cases of real hardship occur, the remedy must be applied by individual charity, a virtue for which no system of compulsory relief can be or ought to be a substitute."

The admission that the Poor Law is not qualified to deal with cases of real hardship simply knocks the bottom out of the whole argument of the 1834 Report. The Poor Law is, in fact, regarded as something subsidiary to the penal system of the country. Elsewhere the Commissioners cast envious eyes at the success of various charitable institutions in London which were not hampered by a belief in the principle of less eligibility, and went to work with no fixed ideas on the relative merits of "deserving" and "undeserving" cases. Indeed it is sorrowfully admitted that the good work of these Societies consists very largely in reclaiming the evil results of the Poor Law system. "The children who enter an ordinary workhouse quit, if they ever

quit it, corrupted where they were well disposed, and hardened where they were vicious." The only cases where workhouse treatment was known to have had satisfactory results was when voluntary committees were formed with sufficient capacity to secure control over the workhouse and to exercise it. It appears that, in one case at least, the exertions of such a committee were greatly impeded by the parish officers. The results of local committees, where they existed, in some cases made an extraordinary difference, especially in regard to the children. "It is shown that whilst nearly the whole of the children of one parish where their education and their training is neglected, become thieves or otherwise pests of society, nearly the whole of the children of another parish where better care is taken of them, are rendered industrious and valuable members of the community."

There is also much evidence as to what happens to "bad females" in proper hands, although it is difficult to realize what was in the minds of a certain exemplary ladies' committee when they decreed that "the hair of the females should be braided, and put under their caps, and no curls or curlpapers seen."

Now as to the provisions of the Poor Law Amendment Act (1834). For the first few years the administration of the Act was to be in the hands of three Commissioners who were to control the

doings of the Guardians and parish officers. They had the widest powers, far more than the Local Government Board has to-day. The difficulties which confronted them and their developments are admirably summarized in the Report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws and Relief of Distress, from which we quote the following:—

“The problem by which the Royal Commission was confronted presented a comparatively broad and simple issue. It was a problem of able-bodied and, to a large extent, rural pauperism. Since that time the situation has been constantly and progressively changing; not only in the sense that the type and the cause of pauperism change as new social and industrial conditions emerge, but also in the sense that there has been a continuous development of charitable and other agencies which hardly existed in 1834.

“Two changes more especially are significant in their relation to Poor Law administration. The first is the restored independence of the agricultural labourer, which, when taken together with the concentration of population in cities, means that what remain to us of able-bodied pauperism is almost entirely urban. The second, and hardly less noteworthy, is the disappearance under improved sanitary conditions of diseases which were formerly among the most potent cases of destitution. To

these two changes it is mainly due that in tracing the development of poor law administration during the last century, we find that it has been continuously in the direction of clearer differentiation of the problem and closer adaptation of treatment to the needs of different classes. Rashly assumed responsibility for the maintenance of large numbers of able-bodied and their dependants had, prior to 1834, swamped the more delicate and discriminative work of dealing with the infirm, the sick, and the children, in much the same way as the presence of an epidemic demands drastic and general treatment and distracts attention from all individual and subtle ills. It is the great merit of the early Poor Law and of early sanitary reformers to have checked [*sic*] the overwhelming evils of the day, and so to have cleared the way for the progressive treatment of difficulties which were then thrown into the background.

“Granted that the position has changed, the question arises how far law and its administration are now adequate to deal with it. . . . To a large extent this specialization of work . . . has been steadily progressing during the last seventy years, and indeed most of the demands for further change lie in the same direction. The question for us to-day is how to satisfy those demands without incurring any risk of reversion to the evils of adminis-

tration before 1834. It would be quite possible for a centralized authority to-day to do elaborately and at great expense just the same mischief as was done crudely and ignorantly by the local authorities before 1834.

“The same development which we shall trace in Poor Law administration has proceeded at even a greater rate in voluntary institutions. Thus it happens that the administrator often finds himself competing or co-operating with rival agencies, some of which may be better adapted for the work he is trying to do, while others may be hindering him every turn. It seems impossible at the present day to determine the function of the Poor Law without also considering and determining its relations to those other agencies.”

This lengthy extract, blowing hot and cold with the same breath, nevertheless sums up the difficulties in the path of the Poor Law reformer. He recognizes his rival in the charitable institution; he must nevertheless take him to his heart. The Commissioners of 1834 had not yet elaborated any philosophy of social progress which would satisfy the requirements of our complex civilization. In Chapter V. we shall endeavour to point out a few at least of the necessary factors of such a philosophy and their place in any valid reconstruction of the relations between the State and Charity.

## CHAPTER IV

### CHARITY IN 1815

WE make no apology for the interpolation, at this stage of our argument, of a historical and descriptive chapter of some length. We are accustomed to speak of progress, knowing that the word implies movement, yet

“What, without asking, hither hurried whence?  
And, without asking, whither hurried hence!”

Many of our most devoted social workers have as little idea of the direction of their work as old Khayyám. If we cannot see plainly where we are coming to, we can at any rate be sure what we are going from. History that is studied does not repeat itself. There is no more necessary part of a social worker's equipment than a knowledge of the industrial history of his country. But as such history is largely outside the scope of this work, we must content ourselves with a sketch of the England of a hundred years ago in 1815, the year of Waterloo, pointing out the problems which are of the most interest to the philanthropist, and

leaving the reader to form his own conclusions as to the necessity and the relative adequacy of individual and of State action.

With the year 1815 and the downfall of Napoleon, England entered upon an entirely new period; and what happened in this period is what we generally mean when we talk about the events of the nineteenth century and about modern progress.

Now, in order to understand what people did, it is necessary to know what they thought. When we speak of the people we mean, of course, Parliament, the Government, the governing classes, the statesmen. And the word "statesman" itself is a clue to the opinion of the time. The word does not only mean a man of state; it is a shortening of another word, "estatesman"—a man with an estate. So we learn at the very beginning that England was governed by the land-owning classes, and what they believed England believed.

Now, what were the beliefs of the time? We know them to-day by the name of *laissez-faire*—"let things alone." This belief or policy was sincerely held, and at the time there appeared to be strong reasons for holding it.

In 1776 Adam Smith published his famous *The Wealth of Nations*, a book which made a tremendous impression. Adam Smith traced a good many of the evils of his day to the very high tariffs that

existed then, and came to the conclusion that the less the State interfered with trade the better. And he did not stop at trade. In his opinion all interference with the freedom of labour was more or less bad. But another economist made a still greater impression upon the public opinion of those times: that was the Rev. T. R. Malthus. In 1798 he published his famous *Essay on the Principle of Population*, a book which, if judged by its results, must be considered one of the most important in the English language. Nowadays we do not believe in Malthus; in 1815 he was very much believed. This is not because he is wrong, but because what was true then is no longer true to-day. Malthus's theory was this. Human beings multiply more rapidly than food increases; both need space, therefore in time—in a short time, Malthus believed—there would be a struggle for existence, and a good many of us would have to go. In a vague sort of way he worked out the idea of the Survival of the Fittest. His facts were undoubtedly correct. At the time the population was growing with extraordinary rapidity, and as the Napoleonic Wars were threatening Britain's food supply, people were very much alive to the fact that this country's food was not going to arrive as a mere matter of course. Malthus was quite right—in 1798. And when he had written his book and proved his case,



he went on to show what should be done in his opinion. He held, for instance, that the Poor Law should be abolished: not in the way recommended by the Minority Report of the Poor Law Commissioners, but just abolished. The result would be, he thought, that the unfit would not survive; their children would die, and the population would be kept from increasing at an unduly rapid rate. In short, the Government was to leave things alone—*laissez-faire*. If it interfered to make the lives of the poorest classes a little more tolerable, it simply encouraged the population to go on increasing: there would be more mouths to feed, and a future generation would have to pay the penalty of such misguided benevolence. And this theory of Malthus went down, as we might say, exceedingly well. Parliament caught the idea—it was a very simple one—and refrained from legislating for the working classes. In 1806, a Committee appointed by Parliament to consider the woollen industry gave an interesting statement of the rights of Englishmen. “The right of every man to employ the capital he inherits or has acquired according to his own discretion without molestation or obstruction so long as he does not infringe on the rights and property of others, is one of those privileges which the free and happy Constitution of this country has long accustomed every Briton to consider as his birth-

right." There you have it! Leave things alone. So it was sincerely believed that it was really for the best to let things take their own course—whatever that might be. And if the working classes attempted to improve their own conditions by striking, forming trade unions or otherwise, they were met with yet another argument—the Wages Fund theory. A certain definite proportion of the national income was supposed to be spent in wages; consequently, if any particular group of workmen wished to raise their wages, they were told that they could only do so at the expense of some other group. Trade unions were believed to be "in restraint of trade," and were not merely illegal but criminal bodies. The unfortunate thing was that these theories about population and the wages fund were held by all alike: by real friends of the working class, such as J. S. Mill, as well as by the other people. All these theories—*laissez-faire*, population and Wages Fund—have now been abandoned. The cost of *laissez-faire* in human life was excessive, and the alternative of State interference in the form of Factory Acts, etc., was found not to have the dreaded consequences; the population has long since stopped growing at the rate which so frightened Malthus and his followers; our food supply is still safe owing to the discovery of new lands, new methods, and quick transit; and the

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Wages Fund doctrine can now be seen to be a hollow fallacy.

So far we have dealt with opinion in 1815 in order to explain why no changes were made, why Parliament did not force its will upon the bad state of things prevailing and make drastic changes. For, if ever drastic changes were needed, it was in the year of which we are speaking. It may be justly said it was the blackest hour in England's history.

There was never a time when the condition of the working classes was more desperate ; there was never a time when this country was more nearly overwhelmed and defeated in war ; there was never a time when trade was so disorganized, when the national debt was so heavy, when there was more misery, disease and destitution than about this period. From 1775 to 1815, for forty years on end, this country was at war, first with America, then with revolutionary France, and, lastly, with Napoleon ; while there was fighting going on in India all the time, now with the French, now with the Dutch, and now with the natives. And the wars produced a fine crop of problems. They caused uncertainty of markets, uncertainty of supply of raw material, difficulty in getting food, difficulties on the money market, high prices which led to enclosing, aggravated Poor Law questions, tremendously increased

taxation, and, finally, caused a long series of years of depression and stagnation after the wars had ceased and Napoleon was in St. Helena. And all these changes and difficulties concentrated and were at their worst in this year of which we are speaking. And yet, all the changes and all the misery of that time were by no means the result of the wars alone. Industrial changes, with the introduction of machinery, were responsible; agricultural changes were responsible; changes in the administration of the Poor Law were responsible. It is difficult to decide how to attack such a subject.

Perhaps the best way is to consider first the effects of the introduction of machinery. Now it is generally believed that machinery was discovered by Arkwright and others about 1760. That is hardly the case. Ever since the reign of Queen Elizabeth there had been a series of inventions which made production on a large scale possible. The inventions of Arkwright and the others were but links in the chain. But little by little machinery was being introduced, and as few working men can afford to own their own machines, the factory system had come into existence, the small artisan had begun to disappear, and what we now know as the capitalist system had come into existence and was in a fair state of development in 1815. When men work together in a factory in large numbers, they obvi-

ously must live near one another, and so industry moved from the village to the town, and the towns of England began to grow. And since it is cheaper to manufacture where coal and iron are near and where water is available for power and for navigation, the new towns that arose were mostly at first in the north of England, and there was a sort of emigration from the west and south to the north. Most of the early machines were very simple to work, and as it had always been the custom to employ children when manufactures were carried on at home, they were naturally sent to work in the factories. As the town population grew very rapidly, more rapidly than houses could be put up, the evils of overcrowding were acute, and as factory work was not to be carried on at home, but the members of the family had to go out to the work and the hours of labour were long, there was a sudden break-up of family life. The whole thing paid the manufacturers. The cotton trade was planted in Lancashire and prospered. The woollen industry moved north to Yorkshire and prospered. The coal mines were opened up and mining prospered. New methods of iron smelting were discovered and that industry prospered. It was a very good time for industry although very bad for the workers. And it was in consequence of this prosperity that the country was able to bear the immense strain of the wars.

They left it weak and nearly exhausted, but they left it alive.

We shall now go on to describe a few of the striking features of the time.

The extraordinary growth of population which so frightened Malthus was one of them. According to the census, the population of Great Britain was in 1801 less than ten millions; in 1821 it had risen to 14,300,000, an increase of about 50 per cent. "In fact, during the five hundred years from 1300 to 1800 the total increase was far less than (probably not one-half of) the increase in these twenty years."<sup>1</sup> And, as I have already pointed out, in the towns, especially in the northern towns, the increase was even more striking.

Prices again were high. According to Jevons,<sup>2</sup> prices in 1809 were exactly 50 per cent. higher on the average than in 1783, just before the revolutionary war. It is unfortunate that there are no reliable figures to show the behaviour of wages during this troublesome period.

"The simplicity of the first machines adapted for spinning, and their small size, fitted them for being tended by children . . . in their early period of mill labour apprentices, from six to twelve years of age, were almost the only workers. These appren-

<sup>1</sup> J. E. Symes in *Social England*, vol. v. p. 832.

<sup>2</sup> *Journal of the Statistical Society*, vol. xxxviii. p. 314.

tices were chiefly taken from the workhouses of large towns . . . and from foundling hospitals and transmitted in droves to the different mills.”<sup>1</sup> The same writer tells us that the house of Peel & Co. employed at one time a thousand of these children, and Arkwright’s first mills were almost entirely filled with very young children.

The natural consequence of the introduction of machinery was the ruin of home industries. It is estimated that about a million human beings were dependent on hand-loom weaving before the coming of the machine. The prices paid for weaving a particular kind of cloth were given by Gaskell as examples of what this meant to the working classes. In 1795 the price was 39s. 9d.; in 1800, 25s.; in 1810, 15s.; and in 1820, 8s.; in 1830 the pay was only 5s. What a drop from 39s. 9d.! Nor was this all. About 1s. 3d. had to be deducted from this wretched 5s. for necessary disbursements, . . . leaving a net wage of 3s. 9d.! This is not an extreme or an isolated case. According to evidence brought before the Factory Commission, the net weekly earnings of the hands engaged in the cotton stocking trade were from four to seven shillings. And the hours of labour appear to have averaged from twelve to fourteen daily!

Wages in the factories were bad. The total

<sup>1</sup> Gaskell, *The Manufacturing Population*.

number of persons in cotton factories was about 212,000, whose average wages worked out to ten shillings per week. Of these, about 22 per cent. were children getting less than four shillings.

All these quotations must sound rather lurid, and perhaps exaggerated. But we believe them to be accurate, as Gaskell was not a fanatic—he was not even opposed to child labour, and derides those who would abolish it. In fact, he says: “There can be no question that the child of nine or ten years of age . . . is capable of performing light work.”<sup>1</sup> But he does draw the line at children of five being made to work a fourteen-hour day, not from any sentimental reasons, but for almost entirely medical reasons.

Another feature of the unregulated industry of the time was 'Truck'; that is, payment in kind instead of in money. The workers, at the end of the week, instead of receiving their wages as cash, got some in cash and the rest in orders entitling them to so much food or cloth, as the case might be. These orders were exchangeable at a shop, generally kept by the mill-owner, called by the workers a Tom and Jerry shop.

The beauty of the arrangement was that he could fix his own prices and so make a good profit, and also he could get rid of any stock that was getting

<sup>1</sup> Gaskell, *Artisans and Machinery*.



spoilt. This may sound fanciful, but we are not inventing. If it is found difficult to believe that such a state of things was possible, we should advise our readers to get a novel called *Sybil*, which describes this sort of thing at length. It is written by a man who could be trusted not to exaggerate; he was a Prime Minister of this country, a Conservative named Disraeli. The sub-title of the book is also interesting. The full name of the book is *Sybil, or The Two Nations*. The two nations are the rich and the poor. To such an extent had social differences come about.

So far we have been speaking only of the state of affairs that prevailed in the towns. But, be it remembered, in those days England was far more rural than to-day. Then, agriculture was far more important than industry, or, if we prefer so to call it, than capital, and, consequently, the landlord was a more important man than the manufacturer or the capitalist.

“In the counties and still more in the close burghs, the landed gentry were able to exercise the influence of a privileged class; and the effort to bolster up these privileges had given rise to widespread administrative inefficiency and political corruption. The evil had been aggravated by the Corn Law of 1815, which helped to maintain the status and prosperity of the landed proprietors at

the expense of the community generally." These are not the words of a demagogue, of some early Victorian Labour M.P. ; they are taken from a book by the Ven. Archdeacon Cunningham, written a few years ago in support of Tariff Reform.

Let us see now what happened. As a result of the Napoleonic Wars, our food supply from abroad was largely cut off ; Napoleon, in fact, tried to cut it off altogether. Consequently prices rose ; we have already given an illustration of that. Consequently it began to pay better than ever to grow wheat over here. Moreover, as already pointed out, there were more mouths to be fed. In 1801, therefore, a General Enclosure Act was passed. Now, before this time a very large portion of England had been common land, used freely by the agricultural population to supply both their own food and fodder for stock, and they had, in addition, held certain common rights, such as pasturing their sheep and so on. All this meant in the long-run that whatever the cottagers earned through their home industries was added to by what they could grow and find, and was, in fact, a very considerable item of their incomes. But the Enclosure Act put an end to a good deal of this. The land was wanted by the landlords for cultivation, for the sake of the extra food and the extra large profits. In some cases the cottagers had legal rights of pasture, etc.,

then they did not suffer greatly; but as in most cases the use they made of the land was based on custom, not on law, the Enclosures caused a great deal of suffering. The small farm was practically abolished. "In the old days there had always been a possibility that he (that is, the labourer) might become an independent farmer, but he was practically precluded from obtaining such capital as was requisite for working a large farm. He was therefore cut off from any hope of bettering himself or becoming his own master; through the progress of Enclosure he was rendered entirely dependent on his own wages as a labourer, and at the same time he was deprived of any prospect of ever being more than a wage-earner and of attaining an improved status."<sup>1</sup> And on top of this his money wages were falling. What was to be done? He had to go to the Poor Law, and the Poor Law had to be altered to meet the case. The way the difficulty was met was by the invention of the Allowance System in 1795, which in a few years became the rule and was made use of in every part of England. We shall give what was done in Arundel in Sussex as an illustration. In this town it was agreed to give applicants for relief two shillings per day if able-bodied men, with an additional eighteenpence per week for every child under fourteen and over two;

<sup>1</sup> Cunningham, vol. ii. p. 715.

and allowances of eightpence to eighteenpence per day for young men between fourteen and twenty-one. The idea was to make up the difference for the time being between the wages the man was getting and his usual wages. One of the results of this system was that it became very profitable to have many children, and so people *had* many and drew the regulation allowances. There were other attempts to solve the problem. There was the Roundsman System and Parish employment. This was a kind of primitive relief works, and failed badly. In the Isle of Wight a sort of farm colony was started to give work to 240 men at the usual rates of wages; that is, at wages above those the men had been getting. The men went on strike for higher wages and got them. In fact, it paid very well to become a pauper. The whole south of England went on the rates. This is hardly an exaggeration. In one village in Wiltshire the only people not on the rates were the Vicar and his family. There were, however, three public-houses. In Cholesbury (Bucks) the poor-rate rose so high that the landlords gave up their rents, preferring to let their tenants have a place rent free than themselves pay more than twenty shillings in the pound in rates; the farmers gave up their tenancies, and the clergyman gave up his glebe and his tithes also to avoid the rates. Then the parish officers

threw up their books. Then the rector had an idea. The landlords, he thought, have given up the land ; why not divide it amongst the poor and let them live on it? But the cost of keeping the poor had already swallowed up the value of the land, and it was only by the assistance of other parishes that the plan was kept going.

Unable in some cases to earn a living in the villages, unable in other cases to compete against rate-aided pauper labour, the best labourers moved from the country to the towns in large numbers. Something like a migration took place from the south to the north.

So far we have been speaking only of the evil effects of the Enclosures. But there were benefits which should not be neglected although they are not nearly of such importance in our opinion as the evils. Improved methods in agriculture, in stock-breeding, better meat and more wool, were all to the good. Apparently England began to grow more corn. In 1815 a Corn Law was passed. It was prohibited to import corn when the price was below 80s. a quarter. It was hoped that this would encourage the English farmer by practically guaranteeing him freedom from foreign competition. We shall not discuss this Act at great length because the tariff controversy is entirely out of our province, but must point out that the chief result of

the Act, cutting off foreign competition as it did, was to make farming in England a very speculative business. In 1816, wheat was selling at 52s. 6d., in 1817 at 117s. Hundreds of farmers were ruined in consequence, and the migration to the towns increased.

We have seen how the factories and the factory system came into existence; we shall now examine how it worked. And this is perhaps the saddest of all the sad pages of this time. The employment of children on a large scale, unregulated and unrestricted by Act, to a large extent unknown to Parliament, led to terrible evils. It became the custom, whenever there was any difficulty in obtaining enough child slaves, to buy up parish apprentices, as they were called, to take children out of a workhouse and put them to work. One writer of the time says: "The custom was for the master to clothe his apprentices and to feed and lodge them in an apprentice house near the factory; overseers were appointed to see to the works, whose interest it was to work the children to the utmost, because their pay was in proportion to the quantity of work they could exact.<sup>1</sup> Cruelty was, of course, the consequence, and there is abundant evidence on record to show . . . that they were harassed to the brink of death by the excess of labour; that they were

<sup>1</sup> Fielden, *Curse of the Factory System*, p. 10.

flogged, fettered and tortured to the most exquisite refinement of cruelty; that they were in many cases starved to the bone while flogged to their work; and that even in some cases they were driven to commit suicide to evade the cruelties of a world in which, though born to it so recently, their happiest moments had been passed in the garb and coercion of a workhouse." These words, it should be remembered, were not written until three parliamentary committees had reported and heard evidence upon these evils, yet they continued. Parliament, holding the theories of *laissez-faire*, could do no more than to let things alone. But the evidence which created the greatest sensation at the time was the evidence of a man named Robert Blincoe. He was an orphan in St. Pancras Workhouse, who at the age of seven was sent with eighty other children to a Nottingham cotton mill, where they were treated with the most inhuman cruelty. Hours of labour were sixteen daily. The food given them was disgusting. In fact, they were part of the time given the same food as pigs, and not getting enough, used to rob the pigs of their share! The details of the treatment of these unfortunate children are too loathsome to be given; under the circumstances one can hardly feel regret that most of them did not live through many years of it. It is a relief to learn that at last the public conscience was stirred, that

little by little this state of things was altered. They were long disappearing. Mrs. Browning's poem, "Do you Hear the Children Weeping?" was written in 1844, which shows that the public conscience alone, even when roused, cannot have things all its own way. However, little by little, as machinery became more complicated, adult labour took the place of child labour and the evils came to an end.

We are now in a position to understand what England was like in 1815. Outside the towns the country was gradually becoming a mass of large estates, whose owners were not merely landlords but had far wider powers. In those days there were no county councils, rural district councils or parish councils. The whole work of local government, with what we know to-day as the Poor Law, and the administration of justice lay in the hands of the landlords, in their capacity as Justices of the Peace. And, as we have seen, people were leaving the country and crowding into the towns, there to endure misery and privation. What appears to have surprised thoughtful observers at the time was the fact that, notwithstanding the huge profits made by the Lancashire and other manufacturers, this misery and privation should have existed at all. But it was the reign of *laissez-faire* ; that is to say, that Parliament had reasons, and



believed in them, against any forces of interference by the State. Agitations were from time to time worked up against the grosser abuses of the system, but they had no easy success. In the first place, who was to be converted? Obviously it was little use appealing to the manufacturers. Parliament was equally obdurate. The workers had no vote; they could not have voiced their sufferings easily. It was not then as to-day; with our halfpenny papers and telegraphs all England can learn inside an hour, for example, the result of an important football match. There were papers it is true, but newspaper taxes made them almost inaccessible to the working class, especially as the majority could not read. William Cobbett had started a weekly paper in 1801 with views which we should to-day call Radical; the price was reduced to 2d. only in 1816—it had been 1s. 2d. before. Nevertheless, Parliament appears to have recognized the evils of child labour, even though it was against its principles to end them. As early as 1802, for example, an Act had been passed for the benefit of the children engaged in the cotton trade, limiting their hours of labour to twelve and prohibiting night work. In 1819 the labour of children under nine years of age in factories was entirely forbidden; between nine and sixteen they might work a twelve-hour day. This seemed too drastic apparently, for

the next year an Act was passed permitting overtime, which had the effect of making it practically useless. But these Acts were dead letters. It was not until 1833, when the first Home Office inspectors were appointed under the Factory Acts, that they began to be of any use. *Laissez-faire* was opposed to interference in anybody's business; inspectors would have interfered, therefore there were no inspectors appointed. And therefore the Acts were not put into operation, because it was nobody's business to set them to work.

It must not be thought that all this time the people were suffering quietly, that nobody minded. Trade unions had come into existence and were springing up all over the country. But once again *laissez-faire* objected. It was believed that trade unions were "in restraint of trade"; that they interfered with the right of the labourer to sell his labour at whatever price he could get for it; that if any workers could get higher wages, through their union, some other workers must go short, and so on. Consequently the early unions were treated by the law with the utmost severity; they were prohibited entirely in 1799, but carried on an underground sort of existence until 1825, when they were permitted to live and no more. In the meantime imprisonment was the lot of any man who was found to belong to a mere benefit society

connected with any trade. Sometimes dissatisfaction rose to boiling-point. In 1816 there were riots amongst the agricultural labourers in the eastern counties; in the Midlands the "Luddite" riots took place, when the rioters, thinking their misery was due to machinery, attempted to destroy the machines in the cotton mills and lace factories. There were other less important riots in Manchester and London. The next year there was a more serious insurrection in Derbyshire, as the result of which three of its leaders were hanged and twenty sent to Botany Bay. In 1819 the people of Manchester got up a demonstration against the Corn Laws, as usual putting down all their misery to one cause. The Government became frightened, and the military were ordered to disperse the crowds. They did so—at the cost of about 100 killed and wounded. This was the famous battle of "Peterloo," so called because it took place outside St. Peter's Church. The Government, in an agony of fear, passed at one stroke six Acts, which at one blow suppressed public meetings, prohibited the use of arms, taxed working-class publications at a crushing rate, and stiffened things up generally. But working-class discontent was not to be suppressed; it remained to force the Reform Bill through Parliament in 1832, and, later, to make Chartism a source of fear to the Government. We mention these things

because it is important to note that these political movements had their origin in purely economic causes.

So far we have confined ourselves to the unattractive side of the picture. There is also an attractive side, but not much of it. We have mentioned movements for reform which failed ; now we shall go on to those which succeeded. The year 1815 saw not only the triumph of *laissez-faire* ; it saw also the first signs of its downfall.

Now, *laissez-faire* was a fixed belief as well as a state of things. It was believed that under the alternative to it, that is to say, if the State began to interfere in industry and if wages were raised, the result would be the ruin of the manufacturers, and the still greater misery of the workers. But eventually there was a reaction from *laissez-faire*, and it began by people seeing that the alternative could work and could pay. There was never a time, however strong might be the influence of *laissez-faire*, when there were no persons to be interested in industrial problems. The reformers of this period had only one solution, only one suggestion to offer for improving social conditions. That was education. It is easy to understand how this was, for, if you come to consider it, free education would not conflict with any of the *laissez-faire* doctrines. Education would not raise wages or

lower them ; it would not bring more children into the world ; it would not interfere with trade ; and, finally, it could not be consumed in drink. About 1815 the Government appointed a "Select Committee on the Education of the Lower Orders"—it would be a bold Government which would speak of the "lower orders" to-day—which found itself quite in favour of educating them—providing, of course, that the State was not to interfere more than absolutely necessary. Other people took up the idea. The greatest of them was Robert Owen.

Owen was a man who, at the age of twenty-six, found himself practically managing director of huge cotton mills at New Lanark, near Glasgow, and the employer of several hundreds of children who, being drawn from the usual source, were mostly pauper children. He held certain theories on education, which he proceeded to put into operation as soon as he had the chance : all the children had to go to school and go through a sort of character-forming discipline. Then he started a sort of co-operative store for the benefit of his employees. But he did not stop there. A little later we find him prohibiting the labour of young children, then shortening hours of labour, and generally behaving in the very reverse manner to *laissez-faire*. It was believed by many people to be ruinous—naturally—and Owen met with a good deal of opposition locally, his own

workpeople being at first very suspicious of his reforms. But Owen triumphed. Not only did his business pay almost fabulous profits, but as a result of a ten-hour day, a living wage and good housing accommodation, drunkenness, disease and vice disappeared from New Lanark. His reforms made a great sensation; people apparently came to visit his works from the ends of the earth to see how it was done! Foreign kings came to consult Owen as to the best means of adopting his views in their countries, and so on. Although Owen afterwards lost credit through establishing several unsuccessful communistic colonies in America, and through dabbling in spiritualism, yet the lesson he taught was not easily forgotten. It was shown by his work that if people were paid good wages they did not have huge families in consequence. He showed that the less the workers were subjected to unrestricted competition the better was their work. He believed and proved the value of what we know to-day as the efficiency of the workers, and showed that increased efficiency was the very reverse of *laissez-faire*. The lesson was a long time being learned, but little by little *laissez-faire* went the way of all outworn theories.

What makes a nation great? We cannot answer specifically, but surely it is one of the marks of a great nation to be able always to produce the right

men at the right time. Philanthropists existed; they came to the front. Men like Owen and Oastler, and, later, Lord Shaftesbury, turned public opinion away from the morbid acceptance of suffering.

And the working classes were fortunate in having leaders who could lead. Kept alive by constant agitations, now for the extension of the franchise, now for a shorter working day, now for the repeal of the Corn Laws, every year brought them a little farther out of the slough into which they had sunk. The workers were not easily roused, but whenever and wherever they were roused they had their way. The next few years are full of triumphs. Little by little a factory code came into operation, trade unions were permitted, the franchise was opened, and so on. England in 1815 was not a happy England, but worth hearing of because it helps us to understand how far we have moved and what we are moving from, and that may help us to understand what we are moving to. That is the first step in the formation of a philosophy of social reform.

## CHAPTER V

### CHARITY SINCE 1834

It is as yet far too early to allow us to see the history of the nineteenth century in its proper perspective. The past is still too much with us; we cannot get away from the spell of events we believe to be salient and personalities we expect to be epoch-making in their significance. The history of Charity during the last three-quarters of a century is equally difficult to summarize; the events and the facts are too numerous and varied, and the conclusions we should obtain from their study would be far too inconclusive.

There is yet another obstacle in the way of a clear understanding of the recent developments in the history of Charity. It is that the nineteenth century happens to be the period when a very great number of phenomena took place, closely related to voluntary organization for philanthropic purposes in many important particulars. Indeed it is virtually impossible to disentangle the history of Charity from the social history of which it is but a small fraction. On the other hand, it is equally impossible



to place Charity accurately in the present or any future scheme of things without the use of the historical background.

The nineteenth century dawned upon one of the most critical periods of our country's history. No relief came to the ever-deepening misery until the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815.

By that year wages were lower and prices were higher than had ever been the case before. The workhouses were full to overcrowding; rural depopulation was proceeding at an unprecedented rate, urged on by the double cause of Enclosure Acts, which drove the labourers off the land, and the growth of the new industry, which drew him into the towns. As a consequence of this last, overcrowding, with all its attendant evils of immorality and disease, was the principal feature of the new cities. There was as yet no sanitary code, and such political philosophy as the governing classes then held was opposed to State interference in any form. The simplicity of the early machinery enabled children to be effective machine-minders, and, consequently, a high premium was set upon child labour, and an appalling wastage of human life resulted. The long-continued wars had drained England of her manhood. Such was the depressing state of things prevailing in 1815.

(The passing of the Reform Act of 1832 signaled

the commencement of a new era in politics. That Act virtually enfranchised the middle classes for the first time, and their influence was immediately felt. The appointment of the Poor Law Commission in the same year was indication of the desire for economical government. In 1835 the Municipal Corporation Act removed at one sweep some of the most serious faults of town government, and placed the Corporations upon an elective basis. This Act was to be the first of a long series of Acts which form the framework of the local government of to-day. Each subsequent extension of the franchise was followed by an immediate development of local government. The granting of the vote in 1867 to male urban householders promptly led to the Education Act of 1871, to "educate our masters," as W. E. Forster said. The enfranchisement of the agricultural labourer in 1884 was immediately followed by the creation of county councils, and shortly supplemented by urban and rural district and parish councils.

This framework of local government rests, it will be seen, upon a voluntary basis; that is to say, upon the assumption that there will always be a sufficient number of men, with adequate gifts, to admit of the selection by the electors of capable bodies of councillors, who will give their services freely for the good of the whole community. More-

over, local government, which at first called for scarcely any voluntary co-operation save the services of the councillors, has gradually extended the scope of volunteer work, and now calls for the services of many thousands of charitably disposed workers. Care committees, school management committees, health visiting and visiting children boarded out by the Poor Law authorities are but a few of the cases where the social worker co-operates with the local government bodies. Here voluntary organization is emphatically a striking modern development.

Now let us turn away from these statutory bodies and glance briefly at the horde of organizations which have come into existence during the last century. We shall find that there has been an extraordinary increase in every conceivable form of voluntary association ; that is to say, of bodies, membership of which is not compulsory by law, whose object is the benefit of the members or of other persons. Every trade, every profession, now has its associations in order to secure mutual aid for its less fortunate members. 'Trade unions and employers' combinations, clerical pension funds and friendly societies, co-operative societies, political organizations of every shade of political colour, to assist or to oppose parties or particular opinions—all these, numbering many thousands, with a total membership certainly greater than the population

of the United Kingdom, exist for a purpose which was scarcely realized more than a hundred years ago. Membership of a society is recognized as a practical means of expressing our membership of one another.

The development of Charity must be associated with this unique development of voluntary organization. The actual number of charities has of course risen enormously, and exhibits an ever-increasing degree of differentiation of purpose and method.

The urgent necessity for the correlation of the manifold activities of some of them led to the formation of the Charity Organization Society as far back as 1867. The object of this, as stated to the Poor Law Commission by the Secretary of the Liverpool C.O.S., is as follows:—

“Ordinarily the work of the Society consists in relieving distress of a temporary kind in whatever way is likely to restore the distressed to self-support. Persons in distress are brought under the Society’s notice by ministers of religion, missionaries, nurses, school - attendance officers or private persons, or personal application is made. Careful investigation is made as to the antecedents and character of the applicants and the prospects of self-support being reserved, and appropriate action is taken.” It is this “careful investigation” that accounts for the Society’s extreme unpopularity amongst the poor. The insistence upon the “moral factor” necessitates

the classification of distressed applicants according as to their "deserving" or "undeserving" qualities, and is not calculated to get the Society looked upon as a "friend in need." But that, the Society might reply, is not its object. It came into existence largely as a result of the wastefulness of the almost indiscriminate almsgiving which used to prevail during periods of distress in London, and now has well over a hundred branches in Great Britain.

It is perhaps no mere coincidence that the C.O.S. came into existence the same year as the first experiment in the free feeding of school children. The C.O.S. represents the views of those who would make charity conditional upon many circumstances; the free meal represents the views of those who would admit only need as a condition of assistance. Each may be regarded as a symbol of a rival philosophy, and it was but fitting that they should make a simultaneous appearance.

A little later in the century we find a most important change coming over philanthropic theory—unexpressed, perhaps, in so many words, but showing itself in practice. It had been the view of the earlier philanthropists that the family must in all circumstances be regarded as a unit. This theory is still held, we believe, in an attenuated form by some of the leaders of the C.O.S. In 1884 came the first signs of distinction in the treatment between

parents and children. The Children's Country Holiday Fund, started in that year, for the purpose of taking children from the slums into the country, for a week or two, was a defiance of much conventional thought.

The Settlement idea is another manifestation of a growing social conscience, and with this the late Canon Barnett's name must be permanently associated.

The novels of Besant and Rice had evoked an amorphous mass of sentimentality which gradually crystallized and formed the "People's Palace." Under the influence of T. H. Green a keen sense of social responsibility had come into existence at Oxford. The death of Arnold Toynbee was made the occasion of a permanent memorial in the form of a Settlement, and Toynbee Hall came into being. Other stimulants to action were provided by a pamphlet which stands almost alone for its effects. Mearns's *The Bitter Cry of Outcast London* drew public attention irresistibly to the problems of poverty. Mr. George R. Sims made good newspaper "copy" of his extensive knowledge of the London poor. About this time, too, we find an extraordinary increase in the number of books and pamphlets on the subject of poverty, leading up to Mr. Charles Booth's monumental *Life and Labour in London*, with its appalling revelations. Both the

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Socialist movement and the school of thought represented by the C.O.S. drew a powerful impetus from this output of brute facts.

As the local authorities and the Government of the country settled down to their new work of social reconstruction, the outward appearance of the social problem gradually changed. The sanitary legislation of 1848 and 1875 reduced the problem of sickness to manageable limits. Cholera, typhus and typhoid were practically abolished, and future Insurance Act Amendment Acts will probably do as much for many of their most dreaded survivors. The tendency nowadays is to prevent disease before it has arisen rather than to attempt to cure it after it has occurred. The medical inspection of school children and the growth of school clinics are the most typical social innovations of the last few years.

Nevertheless, in spite of apparent simplifications, the social problem to-day demands as much study as ever from social workers. The new problems are problems of detail, and are as perplexing as the old. Moreover, we have lost the thought-saving empiricism of our forefathers. Nobody now believes that any single remedy is sufficient to remove any social evil. Tariff reform is no longer regarded as a panacea, even by its most convinced supporters. Socialists no longer demand the unqualified "nation-

alization of the means of production, distribution and exchange." Social science is now a body of knowledge; it used to be a mass of formulæ.

The problem before the social thinker of to-day is the securing of the closest possible correlation of the agencies for the common good, and the extension of their operation to every person in the United Kingdom who is in need of their help. We do not here imply any criticism of the C.O.S., but this body, after all, can only deal with a very small proportion of cases of misery. A capable authority to deal with unemployment, a capable public health authority, working in close relations with the education authority, and statutorily appointed bodies to deal with the aged poor, the blind, the insane, and other specially afflicted classes, would, taken together, do a very great deal; but even so, their services would need to be supplemented by much volunteer effort. The social worker will be with us when the very poor, by dint of minimum wage legislation and the like, no longer exist. And even then the social worker will be kept busy.

For the active philanthropist there can be no question of rival philosophies; it is not his business to engage in unfertile discussions of the relative merits of Socialism and Individualism because he is the fruit of both. Political theories invariably modify themselves in the presence of the actual facts



of life. No Socialist would expect a community ever to come into existence where the benefit of each man's efforts came to be equally distributed over the whole body. No Individualist would expect a community ever to appear where no man gained or lost by the labour of another, but stood by his own immediate exertions. The Socialist type of mind attempts to avoid waste and overlapping by co-ordination under a strong central authority. The Individualist is generally prepared to follow, so long as the central authority is not too strong. The Social Worker keeps the balance.

We have now described roughly the evolution up to the present of the idea of social work. We shall now sketch out the social workers' opportunities by describing what the State and local authorities are doing to uplift, to palliate and to cure, and so introduce the would-be social worker to his task.<sup>1</sup> But it should be remembered that Tennyson's precepts to Lady Clara Vere de Vere cannot now be taken quite in their original sense. Teaching the orphan boy to read, the orphan girl to sew, is well enough, but the teacher must know her business. Professor Urwick has described the qualifications of the social worker as follows:—

“First, he must learn the right attitude to his subject-matter; that is to say, he must learn to

<sup>1</sup> *Methods of Social Advance*, chap. xvi. 1904.

regard the 'poor' as persons, as members of a society normally related to one another and to himself in various ways, and he must learn to understand these various relationships. To this end we have asked him to read certain books of description and advice written by people who have shown in their own doings the influence of this attitude and this understanding. Secondly, he must be taught a right estimate of social 'values,' most of all of the relative importance of comfort and character. And thirdly, he must get a right knowledge of present conditions, at any rate of the localized conditions of the industrial and social life of some one district. To these essentials have been added some knowledge of the recent history of methods of relief and administration, some acquaintance with the self-guided efforts of the working classes to raise themselves above the common vicissitudes of poverty, and some familiarity with the agencies at work at the present day." For the adequate social worker is as much a product of the twentieth century as the problems he goes out to face.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE PROBLEM OF UNEMPLOYMENT

UNEMPLOYMENT is the problem of problems, from which private charity is bound to retreat. The solution is too complex and on altogether too large a scale to be appreciably helped by the uncoordinated activities of small bodies of philanthropists. A few years ago unsophisticated amateur sociologists truly believed that a single remedy was all that was needed to settle the difficulty, and Tariff Reform was sincerely credited with being an adequate solution — and so, incidentally, were relief works. To-day, as the result of many investigations into unemployment, we know better. What we loosely term the “unemployed problem” is really a bundle of problems which have to be dealt with one by one. There are men out of work—and this is the simplest case—who are free from their distress as soon as they can get into another job. They are generally good workmen, whose only difficulty is to make their work continuous; that is, to find one job that shall begin at once after another has been finished. Then there are the under-employed, men,

such as dock-labourers, whose difficulty is that they can get jobs often enough, but these jobs may only last for a few hours or a day or two, and, for several reasons, they find it impossible to make them run on, and so the men are permanently insufficiently employed. It may be pointed out that the trades where under-employment is rife are also the trades where wages are lowest.<sup>3</sup> Lastly, there are the unemployables, a class recruited largely from the ranks of the under-employed, and consisting of men whose strength and will have been broken by illness or privation. For these three classes it is obvious that different methods of treatment are required. For the first, the labour exchanges form the principal machinery of assistance. It is enough for them to have a job found; they are capable of doing well at it. For the second, again, labour exchanges are needed to provide that no job which has to be filled shall be left unfilled because no labourer has heard of it. But more is necessary. Again using the labour exchanges, we have to make work as continuous as possible for as many as possible; this means a surplus will be permanently squeezed out who will need to be specially provided for. Many of those squeezed out of work can be sucked in again by the shortening of hours by law in certain occupations where, to-day, under-employment goes hand in hand with long hours—such as in the case of

railway carters. For the rest, the State must itself provide work, at afforestation, or in retrieving the effects of coast erosion. But even then there will be a balance, and there still remain the unemployables. For them the best treatment is found in labour colonies, where they will receive physical training and will be brought to a state of fitness.

We have given this somewhat lengthy (but even so, incomplete) outline of the remedy for unemployment in order to point out that in practice the social worker can do extremely little. Perhaps the strongest influence he or she can bring to bear on the subject is in the direction of labour colonies, where very little has as yet been done. The provision of workshops for the purpose of wood chopping, on the model of the Church Army and the Liverpool C.O.S., is only a very partial and temporary expedient which covers very little ground. The provision of labour colonies, on the other hand, is likely to have results of far wider significance; and here, too, is a case where State action is leaving the field open to private, or semi-public, experimenters before itself taking any definite steps. A certain amount can be achieved by membership of a Distress Committee (which is appointed by the Guardians), and which makes use of voluntary donations and Government subsidies.

Professor Richard Lodge, speaking to the National

Conference on the Prevention of Destitution on 1st June 1911, described the work of the Murieston Labour Colony, set up by the Edinburgh Distress Committee. His paper supplies so admirable an illustration of the theory and practice of the labour colony, that we make no apology for giving it in a condensed form :

“ When the City of Edinburgh Distress Committee set to work to deal with the problem of unemployment, it found itself confronted with the difficulty of finding suitable relief work, which should not be useless and recklessly extravagant, and should not be work taken out of the hands of other working men. After some experiments in dealing with jobs created or supplied by the municipality, the Committee decided to take the matter into its own hands, and to act under that clause of the Act which authorized the expenditure of money for starting a labour colony.

“ Acting on this decision, the Committee purchased for £5500 the estate of Murieston, consisting of 202 acres of rather poor land, most of which was used for grazing purposes. The estate is situated about thirteen miles from Edinburgh, and is adjacent to the Caledonian Railway from Edinburgh to Glasgow. Besides the house and outhouses, several cottages had been erected on various parts of the estate. After the purchase was completed,

the outhouses were fitted up for the housing of some sixty labourers, and a portion of Murieston House was converted into a residence for the manager, who was selected both for his knowledge of agriculture and for his power of dealing with men.

“It was soon apparent that under the Unemployed Workmen Act it was impossible to maintain a labour colony in the proper sense of the term, which implies a certain amount of segregation and continuous training. We could only give work for a limited period—the average term has been about six weeks—and we were bound to keep the men in touch with the labour market in order that they might return as soon as possible to normal industry. Hence the residential accommodation provided for the men has only been fully occupied during the summer months, and even then the men have returned to town for the week-end. In the winter the great majority of the workmen have been conveyed backwards and forwards by a daily train, and the Committee has paid their fares—4s. a week per man—in addition to their wages.

“Murieston has thus never been a labour colony in anything but name. Although crops have been raised upon a portion of the land, this has only been a temporary measure. The estate has been used to supply relief work, and that relief work has been directed, not to the working of a farm,

but to the improvement of the soil. As soon as this improvement had been effected, the land was destined to be let off in small holdings for market garden purposes. Directly the whole of the soil has been treated, Murieston will cease to serve the purposes of the Distress Committee.

“The interest of the experiment tried at Murieston, which has attracted a good deal of attention from experts, lies in the character of the relief work supplied and in the agricultural value of the improvement effected. I will take the latter point first. Starting with the fields nearest to the railway, the men have been employed, first in trenching the land, and then in inserting a thick layer of city refuse which was carried out by train. As the near fields were completed, the rails of the siding were taken up and relaid to more distant fields, which were similarly treated. In the first year the value of the treatment was tested by growing various vegetables in exhibition plots, some of which had been merely dug over, while adjacent plots had been treated with a layer of refuse. The difference between the crops produced was remarkable, and justified the continuance of the experiment. As soon as sufficient progress had been made the improved land was offered to be let. The existing cottages were utilized, and thus the expense of building was cut down to a minimum.



Already five lots, averaging about fifteen acres apiece, have been leased to market gardeners for ten years at £4, 10s. 0d. an acre. Reckoning from the purchase money, the previous average value of the land may be computed at 10s. per acre. The enhanced value represents the gain accruing from the operations of the Committee.

“While it cannot be contended that this experiment has been actually remunerative, it may be held that the loss is mainly due to the employment of unskilled workmen for short periods, necessitating the introduction of new men just as their predecessors had learned to do the work, and that the loss has been considerably less than in ordinary forms of relief work. It is computed that if skilled labour had been employed, if the cost of its transport could have been avoided, and if the refuse had been obtained for nothing (a good deal of it was so obtained), the work would have actually paid its cost. Of course the neighbourhood to the railway was an indispensable advantage both for carrying out the work and for letting the land. It is this conviction that the relief work has been well and not extravagantly directed which has enabled the Edinburgh Distress Committee to obtain larger and more continuous voluntary contributions from the citizens than have been obtained (I believe) by any other Distress Committee.

“While the work has not been unsatisfactory from the pecuniary point of view, it has proved simple and not unattractive to the men employed. If it should be decided in the future to establish labour colonies on any considerable scale—and there are many who think this is inevitable—the experiment of Murieston may be valuable as a guide for the direction of at any rate some of such colonies. Training colonies, designed to fit men for a return to normal industry, must naturally be of a varied industrial character. But detention colonies—for the mendicant and the vagrant—should rather be of a simple than of a complicated type. Even test colonies—designed to classify unemployed according to their willingness or unwillingness, or their capacity or incapacity to work—may also be based upon a simple and uniform scheme of labour. For such colonies as these two latter categories, the work of reclaiming and improving the unproductive land of the country, as practised at Murieston, is admirably adapted. There will be no cost of transport, as the men will be resident for considerable periods, and the housing accommodation can be of such a character as to be easily moved to another site, when the work of reclaiming one area has been completed. It is, of course, essential that the land shall be within easy access of the railway. But, in Scotland at any rate, there is no lack of

suitable land adjacent to the railway and approximately equi-distant from Edinburgh and Glasgow, in which the refuse of two great cities, instead of being wasted, might be incorporated, with the result of a vast increase in the productive power of the soil.

“There is one last point about Murieston on which I should like to lay stress, and that is the use to which the land is put after the process of reclamation is completed. It is employed for the creation of small holdings, and these might easily be transformed into small properties. There are many of us who hold that in the extension of small holdings and properties lies the salvation of our race, and the checking to some extent of the exhaustion by emigration and otherwise of our rural population. For this purpose we require both the preparing of the soil and the training of the people. I am not without hope that at Murieston, after the letting or selling off of the outlying fields, the central portion of the estate, with the house and the outhouses already fitted up for residents, may be taken as a farm colony for city lads. After a few generations of slum life, our city population needs, like Antæus, to renew its strength by contact with mother earth. If ever we are to translate the policy of ‘back to the land’ from a pious aspiration into actual practice, it must be done by getting hold

of some members of the rising generation in the plastic days of youth and giving them the taste and the training for rural life. And if we can keep the best of them in our own country by providing them with adequate and remunerative occupation on the land, so much the better for the community."

The problem of unemployment, then, is one which the social worker can influence rather than definitely attempt to solve. But it should never be forgotten that not the least of his uses is to permeate with the ideas of his reading or experience the brains of his less socially-minded contemporaries, and so "speed up" the possibilities of reform and more logical thought in the future.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE PROBLEM OF THE AGED

THE treatment of the aged poor presents problems of exceptional definiteness. It is not always possible to distinguish between the disease—sociologically speaking—from which a child, or an “unemployable” casual worker may be suffering, but no such difficulties exist in regard to the aged. Moreover, the fact that the old and decrepit can no longer be expected to hold their own in the labour market prevents any assistance given to them from in any way partaking of the character of a subsidy to wages. For this and other reasons, reformers of all schools are agreed upon the advisability, even the necessity, of cash payments to the aged poor, where they would hesitate to make them to any other section of the indigent. The oldest, one might almost say the traditional form of charity in the country, is the establishment of almshouses for old people. Thousands of such groups of buildings sprinkle our countryside and testify to the existence of the old age pension sentiment, long before our politicians made it part of their programme.

It is frequently pointed out that everybody has opportunities for saving, and that by the exercise of thrift, the poor might be in a position to buy themselves little annuities to tide them over their declining years. We do not wish to denigrate one of the most valuable of human qualities, but we know that where lack of money makes it difficult to spend, it makes it all but impossible to save. Those who are most familiar with the budgets of the poor know well that often a little nest-egg is put by, only to disappear as the result of a spell of unemployment, or, may be, the cost of a funeral. We cannot therefore lend our support to any scheme which makes savings a test of fitness to receive an old age pension. Obviously a childless couple living on the same income as a family with four children can save more than the latter, but who shall say that the former deserve better of the State? During the Old Age Pension agitation, between 1890 and 1907, many contributory schemes of old age pensions were under discussion, but all fell through.

Mr. Charles Booth, who undertook the immense classic survey of Life and Labour in London, was appalled at the amount of aged poverty he met on all sides, and became one of the keenest advocates of old age pensions. He invented a scheme by which every old man or woman, duly armed with a

birth certificate, who presented himself or herself at a post office at a certain hour of the week should be entitled to receive a small sum of money, and no questions asked. The disadvantages of such a scheme are obvious, but the fact that such a close investigator as Mr. Charles Booth could be induced to frame it, shows to what extent the gravity of the problem had impressed him. The problem was indeed grave. Even to-day, about one death in five of London's inhabitants of seventy or more years of age takes place in a workhouse, hospital, or other public institution. In Dublin, where, as everywhere in Ireland, the proportion of old people is exceptionally high, less than one-half die in their own homes.

We have now sketched the general considerations which in 1908 induced the Houses of Parliament to grant old age pensions with something approaching unanimity. As social workers are continually meeting cases where the qualifications for a pension are in doubt, the following list of disqualifications may be of use. Every person of British nationality, and twelve years' residence within the United Kingdom, is entitled to a maximum pension of five shillings per week, except—

1. Persons having incomes, from whatever source, exceeding £31, 10s. 0d. (12s. 3d. per week) per annum.

2. Persons who have habitually failed to work, according to ability, opportunity and need for their own maintenance, and that of those legally dependent upon them. But those who have continuously up to the age of sixty made proper provision against old age and other necessities by means of payment to friendly, provident, or other societies, or trade unions, or other approved means, are not disqualified under this clause.
3. Those who are detained as lunatics.
4. Those undergoing imprisonment without the option of a fine. This disqualification lasts for ten years after the release from prison.
5. Those against whom a detention order may be made under the Inebriates Act, 1898. This disqualification may last, at the discretion of the Court, for any period not exceeding ten years.

Englishwomen who have married aliens do not thereby forego their rights under the Act.

The amount of the pension varies from one shilling to five shillings a week, according to a fixed scale, which varies inversely as the income of the applicant.

Every English county, county borough, and urban district with a population exceeding 20,000 has a Pensions Committee, which decides all questions of eligibility. The administration is in the hands of the Local Government Board, the Post Office, the Treasury, and the Customs and Excise Department,



but these bodies work together fairly smoothly; the L.G.B. does no more than publish the annual report, and there seems no adequate reason why it should remain nominally the central authority for old age pensions.

A Pensions Committee, when in doubt, can itself decide an applicant's age, by his or her appearance, etc. Copies of birth certificates are of course obtainable at Somerset House at one shilling, on supplying particulars of date and place of birth, etc. Pensions Officers themselves as a rule undertake the investigation of applicants' ages, but they have no power to recommend applicants to appear before the Pensions Committee for examination by appearance. This is the duty of the Committee itself, and here, of course, is an opportunity for the social worker to do valuable work, as he or she is often in a position to obtain information which may be denied to an Officer. One of the chief difficulties which the social worker will discover in undertaking this task is the curious psychological trait that the applicant, who is keenly desirous of obtaining the pension or who on account of reduced circumstances has a clear vision of its necessity, will in many cases deceive himself that he has reached the age of seventy in spite of all the documentary evidence that can be produced in disproof of this point. So many necessitous people base their future finance on

the obtainment of this pension that they honestly believe their eligibility, and that belief is so strong that no testimony can shake it.

There are to-day about a million old age pensioners in the United Kingdom, and it is likely that for several years the total number will remain in the neighbourhood of this figure. The most significant features of old age pensions statistics are, first, that about 90 per cent. of the pensioners receive the full pension of five shillings. This is a terrible comment on the urgency of aged poverty. The other feature is that Ireland, with only 10 per cent. of the whole population of the United Kingdom, claims over 20 per cent. of the total number of pensioners. In England and Wales in March 1912, 600 out of every thousand persons over seventy were receiving a pension; that is to say, had less than 11s. 6d. a week to live on.

In proportion as the number of old age pensioners increases, the number of aged paupers decreases. The total number of pensioners on 28th March 1913 in the United Kingdom was 967,921, of whom just over 600,000 were women. Of the total number of persons in England and Wales who were over seventy years of age on 4th January 1913 exactly 60 per cent. were old age pensioners. The proportion ranged in the urban areas from 267 per 1000 in Bournemouth to

778 per 1000 in Bermondsey, and in extra-metropolitan administrative counties from 448 per 1000 in Surrey to 801 per 1000 in Northamptonshire. The payment of old age pensions began in January 1909; but as until 31st December 1910 the receipt of poor-law relief (except of a medical character) constituted a disqualification for the receipt of an old age pension, the effects of the pensions upon aged pauperism only begin to show themselves in 1911. As may be expected, the consequences are most marked in relation to outdoor pauperism, although the quantity of indoor paupers has been very appreciably reduced.

On 31st March 1906 there were in England and Wales 168,096 outdoor paupers; on 4th January 1913 there were only 8563—a percentage decrease of 94·9 per cent. Between the same dates the number of indoor paupers had fallen from 61,378 to 49,207—a percentage decrease of 19·8 per cent. In all, 74·8 per cent. of aged paupers have been transformed. In none of the union counties of England was the decrease of outdoor pauperism less than 91·4 per cent., whilst in Cumberland and Rutland it exceeded 99 per cent. In January 1913, in some ninety unions, mainly of a rural character, there were actually no persons over seventy in receipt of outdoor relief. The number of old age pensioners was just over one-sixtieth of the total population.

As a result of the Old Age Pensions Act the numbers of aged paupers have fallen sharply.

The accommodation provided by the Poor Law varies, according to the policy of the local Boards of Guardians, from extreme harshness and no alternative to workhouse treatment to separate housing quite away from the workhouse premises (Woolwich), or in a row of cottages, each with two inmates (Sheffield). Little details of treatment vary also; from nothing at all to the provision of little comforts in the way of tea, tobacco, etc. But these, we regret, are exceptions, at any rate in England. "It is to the credit of the destitution authorities of Scotland that, with the cognizance of the Local Government Board for Scotland, they have for the most part long adopted a generous policy with regard to the deserving aged. In one respect they have even gone farther than the most up-to-date of English Boards of Guardians. They have combined the provision of agreeable quarters with outdoor relief. In the comfortable cottages, already old villa residences, that are termed, in some Scotch parishes, 'parochial homes,' we ourselves found the deserving aged inmates, not only enjoying the furnished lodgings, free firing and attendance that is provided, but receiving in addition, to dispense as they think fit, their 'aliment' of three or four shillings a week. They may, if they choose, hand their money,

or any part of it, to the salaried housekeeper, to provide their meals with; or they may, if they prefer, make any or all of their purchases for themselves, and cook their own meals over their own fires in their own way. This appears to us the best thing that has yet been done in the way of public provision for the aged.”<sup>1</sup>

We would suggest in conclusion that the State might wisely undertake, in a manner more fitting than that accorded at the present time to a pauper, the funeral expenses of all persons whose income is under a certain sum. So much insurance money, needed too often to keep the bereaved family alive, is wasted upon this ceremony, and the State could undertake it more fittingly at very little expense.

<sup>1</sup> Minority Report, Poor Law Commission, Chap. vi.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE PROBLEM OF PUBLIC HEALTH

THE administration of the law relating to Public Health lies in the hands of a network of authorities, although the ultimate control lies with the Local Government Board. Scotland and Ireland have their own Local Government Boards, which are in a corresponding relation to their sanitary codes. Nowhere are the ramifications of either public or private assistance so extensive as in the sphere of public health, and nowhere is there so much overlapping.

The care of the sick has always been recognized as a duty, but only lately as a national as well as an individual duty. The mediæval State's activities with regard to the sick were limited to the occasional digging of plague pits and to the interdiction of unsanitary practices: "The court rolls of Stratford-on-Avon show that in 1552 Shakespeare's father was fined for depositing filth in the public street in violation of the by-laws of the manor, and again in 1558, for not keeping his gutter clean."<sup>1</sup> But,

<sup>1</sup> Blake Odgers, *Local Government*, 2nd edition, p. 124.

although several municipalities carried through private legislation on their own behalf, it was not until 1848 that the first Public Health Act was passed; and this did not apply to London.<sup>1</sup> Under this a Board of Health was appointed, later to be amalgamated with the Poor Law Board into the Local Government Board. Under the Act local Boards of Health were established. In 1872, an amending Act made the Boards of Guardians the rural sanitary authorities. Later, in 1894, when rural district councils were established, these became the rural sanitary authorities. But the members of a rural district council constitute the Board of Guardians for their district, and the Poor Law is one of the sanitary authorities. Hence we have the extraordinary anomalous state of affairs that a single body of persons act in a twofold capacity and administer two entirely different sets of sanitary machinery, based on different, indeed on conflicting principles, and overlapping at many points.

The Public Health Act of 1875 took the place of the Act of 1848, and remains to this day the basis of all health legislation. Urban and rural district councils were intended to be primarily health authorities, to aid the sanitary work of the county

<sup>1</sup> See *The History of the Public Health Agitation*, by B. L. Hutchins, for a sketch of the pioneers of the movement.

councils. "Public Health" is a term with an extremely wide connotation. It includes, or has been made to include, water-supply, housing, and the prevention of offensive trades, such as soap-boiling. England and Wales are divided into about 1830 sanitary districts, 666 rural districts, 324 municipal boroughs and 29 metropolitan boroughs. These all appoint a medical officer of health and an inspector of nuisances. The duties of the medical officer of health are as follows :<sup>1</sup>

1. To keep himself as fully informed as possible of the state of health of the inhabitants of the district, and of all conditions affecting it.
2. To advise the local authority on all matters affecting the public health.
3. To direct and superintend the work of the inspector of nuisances.
4. To make special inquiry into any outbreak of infectious disease, and to advise and direct measures for preventing its extension.
5. To inspect food and drink exposed for sale, and to take action if it appears to be unwholesome.
6. To report weekly to the Local Government Board and the county medical officer of health the cases of infectious diseases notified to him.
7. To report at once to the Local Government Board any case of plague, cholera, or small-

<sup>1</sup> As summarized in Nelson's *Year-Book of Social Progress*, from the L.G.B. Order of 13th December, 1910.



pox in his district, or any serious outbreak of infectious disease.

8. To inspect and report on annually all workshops in his district.
9. To report annually to the local authority on the health of his district, with tabulated statistics of births, deaths and notifiable sickness, and on his work and that of the inspector of nuisances during the year; and to send copies of his report to the Local Government Board, the Home Office, and the county medical officer of health.

The work of the medical officer of health and of the inspector of nuisances is of course assisted by a body of subordinate officials. Most local authorities nowadays avail themselves of the services of health visitors, who may be paid or voluntary. Health visitors are required to have received instruction from one of several recognized institutions before their appointment. The National Health Society is the body which is usually selected; this grants a certificate after a six months' course.

Outside London, health visitors, when paid, are usually styled "Assistant Inspectors of Nuisances." The work of the medical officer of health, as we have seen, covers an enormously wide field, and in crowded districts the M.O.H. is generally extremely grateful for intelligent assistance. He is in most cases an overworked man to whom the

following up of cases is a physical impossibility without the help of an army of visitors.

The county councils have also several important public health powers. It prevents the pollution of rivers. It appoints a county medical officer and a county analyst. It has to undertake the sanitary duties of any rural district that is backward in discharging them, and it must supervise the public health work. The county medical officer may represent to the Local Government Board any instances of neglect which he himself cannot put right.

We see therefore that the principal share of sanitary administration is borne by the county councils and the urban and rural district councils, and by the municipalities. We have already mentioned the fact that the Poor Law is also a health authority.

When the Poor Law administers medical relief to an applicant in England and Wales, this counts as Poor Law relief.<sup>1</sup> Lately there has been a tendency to get rid of this disqualifying circumstance, as for example in the Old Age Pensions Act, but the Poor Law still manufactures paupers: a man or woman who has suddenly fallen ill and who has been removed from home, or, it may be, from the scene of an accident, to a Poor Law infirmary, or to

<sup>1</sup> But not in Ireland.

the hospital ward of a workhouse, becomes a pauper. But it may happen that the patient may be suffering from a disease for the treatment of which there exists a special hospital in the neighbourhood. In this case the patient may be transferred to this hospital, and when this happens, he ceases to be a pauper and retains his right to vote at elections.

An even more absurd state of affairs exists in London. Here the Metropolitan Asylums Board maintains a dozen great hospitals. The Board is mostly composed of representatives of Metropolitan Boards of Guardians and the hospitals are maintained out of the poor-rate. But the patients in these hospitals are by statute free from the pauper stigma, and do not appear in Poor Law statistics. Here there is a case where the law seems to have, as it were, granted a special exemption from pauperism to the sick poor of London!

Now ill-health, as every social worker quickly learns, is the principal cause of pauperism.<sup>1</sup> The extension of the work of a public health body is an actual preventative of pauperism. Yet we have here another anomaly, namely, that the Poor Law, which deals with all cases of pauperism, has not the power to deal with its most potent cause, but has to leave it in the hands of other authorities.

<sup>1</sup> For confirmation of this statement, see the Majority Report of the Poor Law Commission, part v. chap. 3, sec. 196.

The treatment of poor law patients varies considerably, but is generally unsatisfactory. Relieving officers, who grant medical relief orders for outdoor patients, are not themselves qualified to decide what sort of treatment the applicant requires, and the medical officers attached to workhouses are always underpaid. Generally speaking, the cost of medicines, etc., has to come out of his salary. But, it will be noted, from their very constitution Boards of Guardians can do nothing to prevent the never-ceasing torrent of sick poor who knock at their doors. The work of prevention, by the proper treatment of the children, by the erection of sanitary houses, by the assurance of pure food, and healthy conditions of labour, is not in the hands of the Guardians at all. "It is not to the Boards of Guardians, in 1907 still the sanitary authorities in non-urban districts, that we owe the elaborate medical organization of an up-to-date Public Health Department, with its peripatetic health visitors and diagnosing doctors, its milk depots and campaign against infantile mortality, its gratuitous supply of antitoxins and diarrhoea medicine, its gratuitous hospitals and sanatoria no longer confined to small-pox and fever."<sup>1</sup>

It was this fact, that the Poor Law was a rival,

<sup>1</sup> *English Poor Law Policy*, p. 220. By Sidney and Beatrice Webb.

and an unsuccessful and uneconomical rival at that, that made four of the members of the Poor Law Commission break away from the rest and, in their Minority Report, protest against the continuance of a system whereby two different sets of authorities should exist side by side, neither charged with the responsibility of preventing as much disease and pauperism as could be prevented.

The writers of the Minority Report point out some extraordinary facts as to the growth of the work of the Public Health Authorities—facts which are not tabulated in any official publication and so escape general notice. “Starting from the provision of temporary isolation hospitals for cholera patients and then for those attacked by smallpox, the Public Health Authorities now maintain over 700 permanent municipal hospitals, having, in the aggregate, nearly 25,000 beds (in 1909) or nearly as many as all the endowed and voluntary hospitals put together. These vary in size and elaboration, from the cottage or shed with two or three beds set aside for an occasional smallpox patient, up to such an institution as the Liverpool City Hospital, divided into seven distinct sections in as many different parts of the city and having altogether 938 beds, served by six resident and seven visiting doctors, and treating nearly 5000 patients a year, for an average period of seven or eight

weeks.”<sup>1</sup> One of the chief advantages which the public hospital has over the Poor Law infirmary is that the former takes all classes of patients, including well-to-do paying patients. “In Scotland it has even been definitely laid down by the Local Government Board that it is for the Local Health Authority to treat all cases of phthisis; and that sufferers from this disease should not come within the Poor Law at all.”

But hospital care is by no means the only instance where the Public Health Authority shows itself the better of the Poor Law. The Poor Law has been entrusted with the work of vaccination since 1840, this comprising the one instance where it supplies all comers without reference to their economic condition. But “the importance, in certain diseases, of the prompt administration of specific remedies has led the Public Health Authorities to supply these gratuitously to all who will accept them. . . . The Manchester Town Council, and various other bodies, distribute bottles of diarrhoea mixture to any one in need of them, using all the police stations as distributing agencies. But the remedy usually distributed gratuitously is the antitoxin serum for diphtheritic cases. The extreme importance of promptitude in the administration of this remedy, and the great saving of expense implied by the

<sup>1</sup> Minority Report of Poor Law Commission, chap. v. G. (i).

prevention of the spread of diphtheria, have led very many Public Health Authorities, sometimes after a vain attempt to enlist the co-operation of the Boards of Guardians, to supply it gratis, on demand, to any medical practitioners; sometimes, as at Blackburn, through the police stations among other agencies."<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, Public Health Authorities have been opening up out-patients' departments.

The hospitals of England provide the triumph of the voluntary worker. For it was entirely through the private efforts of charitable people that this country owned any hospitals at all. At the end of the eighteenth century all hospital work was carried out and supported by voluntary effort. To-day, two-thirds of the hospitals are maintained by public and other funds. As we have pointed out in another chapter of this book, it is impossible for any institution which is solely run by voluntary subscriptions to achieve the fullest possible amount of good. In this connection no better example can be adduced than the *Annual Report of the Royal Free Hospital* of 1845, when an appeal was made for a public grant and refused:—

“In many countries hospitals for the sick are State institutions. . . . The Royal Free Hospital . . . on equally free principles with any continental hospitals, cannot work for want of funds” (17th

<sup>1</sup> Minority Report, chap. v. G. (iii).

*Annual Report of the Royal Free Hospital, 1845,*  
p. 9).<sup>1</sup>

The first hospital to be founded by voluntary subscription was in the year 1719, and to the historical student it is interesting to note that this movement was contemporaneous with the first attempts at the provision of elementary education for the children of the poor.

There can be little doubt that, until the enactment of the National Insurance Act of 1912, the support of private hospitals was the most popular form of charity in this country. As Kirkman Gray points out, the healing of the sick is so direct an appeal that it always obtains the overwhelming advantage of "annual pulpit oratory" and the full weight of the Press. The response has always been astounding. The failure to obtain sufficient money for the complete operation of their needs is inherent, as we have said, in voluntary subscriptions, but this comparative failure is of small account compared with the almost miraculous way funds have ever been forthcoming to meet nearly all the ravages of illness and to advance with the rapid developments of surgery and hygiene. But this has only been achieved by the wholehearted efforts of such able "beggars" as the present Lord Knutsford.

<sup>1</sup> B. Kirkman Gray, *Philanthropy and the State*, p. 223.



## PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEM 103

In the year 1911 the following figures testify to the vastness of the undertaking of the cure of sickness in the United Kingdom :—

	Total number of beds available.	Average number occupied daily.	Number of Patients.	Number of beds provided per 1000 of the population.	Number of In- patients per 1000 of the population.
England and Wales .	38,379	31,080	452,265	1·06	12·5
Scotland . . .	6,060	4,890	68,157	1·27	14·3
Ireland . . .	5,415	3,828	56,282	1·23	12·6
Total . . .	49,854	39,798	576,704	1·10	12·7

These figures refer to 110 hospitals in London, 567 in the rest of England and Wales, 75 in Scotland, and 84 in Ireland—a total of 836. The average during 1911 was  $14\frac{1}{2}$  patients for each bed, and each patient stayed in the hospital an average of 25 days. Taking the United Kingdom as a whole, voluntary effort provides 11 hospital beds for each 10,000 inhabitants; England and Wales are below the average with  $10\frac{1}{2}$  per 10,000, but Scotland and Ireland are above it, with  $12\frac{3}{4}$  and  $13\frac{1}{2}$  per 10,000 respectively.

Besides the patients admitted for treatment as in-patients, most of the hospitals have an out-

patient department, and through these an enormous number of persons pass every year. The London Hospital, for instance, deals with over 100,000 out-patients a year, and these make over 250,000 attendances.<sup>1</sup>

Of these figures only one criticism is possible. There is more work to be done and there is no certainty about the money. Only so late as 23rd January 1914 a letter appeared in all the leading London papers acknowledging the completion of a £100,000 collection to pay off the existing debt upon the London Hospital. The author of the letter then pointed out that at least £100,000 a year was necessary to keep it in the least free from debt, and then added the significant footnote that money was still wanted for the erection of a "606" or Salvarsan ward.

The need for State support was most clearly emphasized in the year 1897 when the King Edward's Hospital Fund was started to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria. This was a fund started to secure more efficient support and on a more systematic basis for all hospitals within a seven-mile radius of Charing Cross. At the time of its inauguration a spirited protest was made by a well-known author, who took the legitimate view that the Prince of Wales, who became patron of the

<sup>1</sup> *The Year-Book of Social Progress*, 1914 (Nelson's), p. 419.

undertaking, was committing an unconstitutional act in taking up a definite position upon one of the most vexed political subjects of the day, the question of the State Endowment of Hospitals.

In these days there can be no serious doubt as to the advisability of this step. In the year 1865 the *Lancet* appointed special Commissioners<sup>1</sup> to consider the condition of the State-run workhouse infirmaries. Although the Commissioners found that these infirmaries were in the most pitiful condition, yet at the same time they saw that they must become eventually "the real hospitals of the land,"<sup>2</sup> and this is but the thin end of the wedge for suggesting that State support is necessary. Under the Poor Law to-day even more cases of sickness are undertaken than by the hospitals run by voluntary subscription, and it cannot be seriously contended that the work undertaken there is less efficiently carried out. Beyond this, the rapid development of school clinics, children's care committees, and the very efficient undertakings of the Educational Authorities, all suggest that the whole question of public health should be unified and entirely supported by State subsidies. And this view is sustained by the fact that by the provisions of the National Insurance Act, 1911, a sum of about £57,000

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Ernest Hart, Dr. Ainstie and Dr. Carr.

<sup>2</sup> Kirkman Gray, *Philanthropy and the State*, p. 225.

a year is put aside for medical research and inquiry. But, nevertheless, the strangely English trait which has a loathing for bureaucracy and a fear of State interference still prevents this desirable achievement. We cannot do better than combat this point with the well-weighed words of Professor G. Moore of Liverpool University before the British Medical Association in July 1913 :—

“The voluntary hospital system acting alone could not solve the sociological problem of the treatment and prevention of disease among the whole mass of the industrial population. Unification was needed, and the general expenses of the equipment and running of the unified system of hospitals could only be provided by municipalities and State combined. It was absurd to argue that human nature would be changed because the State as a whole recognized and performed its duty towards a national problem. The old conception of the charitable hospital as a place for the relief and palliation of disease must be replaced by a scientific realization of the hospital as the pulsating life-centre of a little corps charged with the execution of an important task, the maintenance of the highest degree of health in a given district, and correlated to similar corps or units all over the country. Provisionally, it might be suggested that the unit of population served by a municipal or national hospital

should average about 100,000. Such a hospital would require 80 to 100 beds, and there should be a body of 60 or 65 medical men attached to it and giving it whole-time service. The work of the medical officers should be varied from time to time, so that each should acquire a full knowledge of the work. The services of all would be available to all the citizens of the district, and as a corps they would be charged with the health administration of both the individual and the environment. Such a system could be demonstrated to be both more economical and more effective in purpose than our present haphazard system of running medicine as a business, concerned almost solely with the task of patching up the individual patient after disease had already made its inroads.”<sup>1</sup>

Not the least of the services that the social worker can perform would be the completion of this desired change. Indeed it would be the brightest jewel in the crown which philanthropy is entitled to wear for its work in the cause of sickness.

The Mental Deficiency Act, 1913, came into full operation on (appropriate date!) All Fools’ Day, 1914. This now becomes the chief, indeed the only, law of lunacy. Not only will it apply to those already certified as insane, but, it is believed, will also help those many unfortunate persons—estimated

<sup>1</sup> *Year-Book of Social Progress*, p. 421.

to number 150,000 in all—who while not certifiably insane, are sufficiently helpless as to require special attention. The Act, in going through Parliament, was fiercely opposed by some enthusiasts who claimed that it was contrary to the principles of liberty; ignoring the fact that there can be no liberty where there is no responsibility. In fact, the passing of the Act was to a certain extent delayed by their action. Whatever justification there may be for their point of view, there is no doubt that, in the words of Mr. T. E. Harvey, M.P., “our success in the task must depend not upon the fresh powers which the Act provides, so much as upon the generous wisdom and the kindly spirit inspiring its administration, the self-sacrifice and enthusiasm of the civic volunteers whose co-operation it will call forth.”

Just as any sane social policy must be preventive in its action no less than curative, so we must look to the prevention of insanity, and to the cure of it while yet in its early stages, rather than to the doctoring up of lunatics when it is too late ever to entertain any hope for their return to sanity. We do not say that this Act will achieve this desirable result, but we emphatically declare that it is a thousand times preferable to the bad old system, now to disappear, under which horrors such as those described in the Annual Report of the Local

Government Board for 1903-4 were common, and remained common, to the day of the passing into effect of the Act. We do not wish to harrow our readers' feelings by repeating any of the ghastly descriptions of half-insane old women nursing babies, etc.—many such things are to be found in the eight volumes of evidence before the Royal Commission on the care and control of the Feeble-Minded. This Commission reported that there were in 1906 no less than 11,151 persons certified to be of unsound mind in the workhouses of England and Wales. There were also about 100,000 mentally defective paupers in County and Borough Asylums and the District Asylums in Scotland. We shall describe the principal features of the Act for the purpose of helping social workers who are confronted with cases of defectives.

Who are the defectives? The Act begins by classifying them as follows :

*Idiots* ; that is to say, persons so deeply defective in mind from birth or from an early age as to be unable to guard themselves against common physical dangers ;

*Imbeciles* ; that is to say, persons in whose case there exists from birth or from an early age mental defectiveness not amounting to idiocy, yet so pronounced that they are incapable of managing themselves or their affairs, or, in the case of children, of being taught to do so ;

*Feeble-minded Persons* ; that is to say, persons in whose

case there exists from birth or from an early age mental defectiveness not amounting to imbecility, yet so pronounced that they require care, supervision and control for their own protection or for the protection of others, or, in the case of children, that they, by reason of such defectiveness, appear to be permanently incapable of receiving proper benefit from the instruction in ordinary schools ;

*Moral Imbeciles* ; that is to say, persons who from an early age display some permanent mental defect, coupled with strong, vicious or criminal propensities on which punishment has had little or no deterrent effect.

(It would therefore appear that a Moral Imbecile, amongst other things, would not be capable of being classified as such, unless he had been punished, but without effect.)

The administration of the Act is to be in the hands of a Board of Control, a new national body, under which the County and County Borough Councils will act.

To the social worker the principal opportunity provided by the Act will be the care and supervision of such defectives as are to remain in the family, as it appears that boarding-out, on the model of Poor Law children, will be adopted in many cases. It is difficult to speculate with certainty on the operation of an Act only just in force, but it would appear that the most hopeful consequences may be expected from this measure.



As the Act is not yet well known, we reproduce here the principal clauses which will affect social workers:—

2. (1) A person who is defective may be dealt with under this Act by being sent to or placed in an institution for defectives or placed under guardianship—

(a) at the instance of his parent or guardian, if he is an idiot or imbecile, or at the instance of his parent if, though not an idiot or imbecile, he is under the age of twenty-one; or

(b) if in addition to being a defective he is a person—

(i) who is found neglected, abandoned, or without visible means of support, or cruelly treated; or

(ii) who is found guilty of any criminal offence, or who is ordered or found liable to be ordered to be sent to a certified industrial school; or

(iii) who is undergoing imprisonment (except imprisonment under civil process), or penal servitude, or is undergoing detention in a place of detention by order of a court, or in a reformatory or industrial school, or in an inebriate reformatory, or who is detained in an institution for lunatics or a criminal lunatic asylum; or

(iv) who is an habitual drunkard within the meaning of the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1900; or

- (v) in whose case such notice has been given by the local education authority as is hereinafter in this section mentioned ; or
- (vi) who is in receipt of poor relief at the time of giving birth to an illegitimate child or when pregnant of such child.

(2) Notice shall, subject to regulations made by the Board of Education, to be laid before Parliament as hereinafter provided, be given by the local education authority to the local authority under this Act in the case of all defective children over the age of seven—

- (a) who have been ascertained to be incapable by reason of mental defect of receiving benefit or further benefit in special schools or classes, or who cannot be instructed in a special school or class without detriment to the interests of the other children, or as respects whom the Board of Education certify that there are special circumstances which render it desirable that they should be dealt with under this Act by way of supervision or guardianship ;
- (b) who on or before attaining the age of sixteen are about to be withdrawn or discharged from a special school or class, and in whose case the local education authority are of opinion that it would be to their benefit that they should be sent to an institution or placed under guardianship.

3. (1) The parent or guardian of a defective who is an idiot or imbecile, and the parent of a defective who,

though not an idiot or imbecile, is under the age of twenty-one, may place him in an institution or under guardianship: Provided that he shall not be so placed in an institution or under guardianship, except upon certificates in the prescribed form signed by two duly qualified medical practitioners, one of whom shall be a medical practitioner approved for the purpose by the local authority or the Board, and, where the defective is not an idiot or imbecile, also signed, after such inquiry as he shall think fit, by a judicial authority for the purposes of this Act, stating that the signatories of the certificate are severally satisfied that the person to whom the certificate relates is a defective, and the class of defectives to which he belongs, accompanied by a statement, signed by the parent or guardian, giving the prescribed particulars with respect to him.

(2) Where a defective has been so placed in an institution for defectives or under guardianship, the managers of the institution or the person under whose guardianship he has been placed shall, within seven days after his reception, send to the Board of Control hereinafter constituted (in this Act referred to as the Board) notice of his reception and such other particulars as may be prescribed.

4. A defective subject to be dealt with under this Act otherwise than under paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of section 2 of this Act may so be dealt with—

- (a) under an order made by a judicial authority on a petition presented under this Act; or
- (b) under an order of a court, in the case of a defective found guilty of a criminal offence, punishable, in the case of an adult, with imprisonment or penal servitude, or liable to

be ordered to be sent to an industrial school ; or

- (c) under an order of the Secretary of State, in the case of a defective detained in a prison, criminal lunatic asylum, reformatory or industrial school, place of detention or inebriate reformatory ;

but no such order shall be made except in the circumstances and in the manner hereinafter specified.

*Requirements as to the making of Orders*

5. (1) An order of a judicial authority under this Act shall be obtainable upon a private application by petition made by any relative or friend of the alleged defective, or by any officer of the local authority under this Act authorized in that behalf.

(2) Every petition shall be accompanied by two medical certificates, one of which shall be signed by a medical practitioner approved for the purpose by the local authority or the Board, or a certificate that a medical examination was impracticable, and by a statutory declaration made by the petitioner and by at least one other person (who may be one of the persons who gave a medical certificate) stating—

- (a) that the person to whom the petition relates is a defective within the meaning of this Act, and the class of defectives to which he is alleged to belong ; and
- (b) that that person is subject to be dealt with under this Act, and the circumstances which render him so subject ; and
- (c) whether or not a petition under this Act, or a petition for a reception order under the

Lunacy Acts, 1890 to 1911, has previously been presented concerning that person, and, if such a petition has been presented, the date thereof and the result of the proceedings thereon; and

(d) if the petition is accompanied by a certificate that a medical examination was impracticable, the circumstances which rendered it impracticable.

(3) If a petition is not presented by a relative or by an officer of the local authority, it shall contain a statement of the reasons why the petition is not presented by a relative, and of the connection of the petitioner with the person to whom the petition relates and the circumstances under which he presents the petition.

(4) Where the Board are satisfied that a petition under this section ought to be presented concerning any person, and that the local authority have refused or neglected to cause a petition to be presented, they may direct an inspector or other officer to present a petition, and this section shall apply accordingly.

11. (1) An order made under this Act that a defective be sent to an institution or placed under guardianship shall expire at the end of one year from its date, unless continued in manner hereinafter provided:

Provided that, in the case of any institution, the Board may, by order, direct that orders that persons be thereto sent shall, unless continued as hereinafter provided, expire on the quarter day next after the day on which the orders would have expired under the above provision.

(2) An order shall remain in force for a year after the date when, under the preceding provisions of this

section, it would have expired, and thereafter for successive periods of five years, if at that date and at the end of each period of one and five years respectively the Board, after considering such special reports and certificate as is hereinafter mentioned, and the report of any duly qualified medical practitioner who, at the request of the defective or his parent or guardian, or any relative or friend, has made a medical examination of the defective and the means of care and supervision which would be available if the defective were discharged, consider that the continuance of the order is required in his interest and make an order for the purpose :

Provided that, where a defective was, at the time of being sent to the institution or placed under guardianship, under twenty-one years of age, the case shall be reconsidered by the visitors appointed under this Act within three months after he attains the age of twenty-one years.

(3) On such reconsideration the visitors shall visit the defective or summon him to attend before them, and inquire into his mental condition and the means of care and supervision which would be available if he were discharged, and into all the circumstances of the case, and, if it appears to them that further detention in an institution or under guardianship is no longer required in the interest of the defective himself, shall order him to be discharged :

Provided that, if the visitors do not order his discharge, the defective or his parent or guardian may, within fourteen days after the decision of the visitors has been communicated to the defective and his parent or guardian, appeal to the Board.

(4) The special reports above mentioned shall be :

(a) A special report by the visitors, made within one month after having seen the defective, as to his mental condition and the means of care and supervision which would be available if he were discharged, and stating whether, in the opinion of the visitors, the defective is still a proper person to be detained in his own interest in an institution or under guardianship ; and

(b) a special report as to the mental and bodily condition of the defective made, in the case of a person detained in an institution, by the medical officer of that institution, and in any other case by a duly qualified medical practitioner, and shall be accompanied by a certificate that the defective is still a proper person to be detained in his own interest in an institution or under guardianship, and the person sending the special report shall give to the Board such further information concerning the defective to whom the special report relates as they may require.

(5) A certificate under the hand of the secretary to the Board that an order has been continued to the date therein mentioned shall be sufficient evidence of the fact.

14. The persons liable to maintain a defective under the age of twenty-one, against whom an order to contribute towards his maintenance may be made under this Act, shall include, in the case of illegitimacy, his putative father and, if the judicial authority having cognizance of the case thinks fit, a person other than his putative father cohabiting with his mother :

Provided that, where a defective is an illegitimate, and an affiliation order for his maintenance has previously been made on the application of his mother under the enactments relating to bastardy, the judicial authority shall not (unless in view of the special circumstances of the case he thinks it desirable) make an order for contribution against the putative father, but may order the whole or any part of the payments accruing due under the affiliation order to be made to the local authority or such other person as may be named in the order, to be applied towards the maintenance of the defective.

18. The nearest adult relative or the guardian of a defective in an institution or under guardianship under this Act shall be entitled to visit the defective at such times and at such intervals (not exceeding six months) and on such conditions as may be prescribed, except where, owing to the character and antecedents of the person proposing to visit the defective, the Board consider that such a visit would be contrary to the interests of the defective.

#### THE BLIND AND OTHER AFFLICTED

In the year 1800 there were only four institutions for the benefit of the blind, but the last century has seen a large increase both in the number of institutions founded by private charity and in the formation of seven unions of institutions, societies and agencies for the blind.<sup>1</sup> This development largely came about through the report in 1889 of

<sup>1</sup> H. J. Wilson, *Charities Register*, 1913.



the Royal Commission for the Blind, the Deaf and the Dumb, and which resulted in the Elementary Education (Blind and Deaf Children) Act, 1893. By this Act the local education authorities are responsible for the education of all blind children between the ages of five and sixteen. During the last few years, however, there has been a distinct change of outlook upon the management of schools for afflicted children. The cause of this was the introduction of the School Medical Officer. "The result of medical inspection has been to bring to light a number of children temporarily or permanently defective, for whom education in the ordinary public elementary schools is unprofitable, and for whom special educational provision is necessary."

Before 1908 the discovery of these children was for the most part left to lay officers and teachers, at whose initiative they were brought before the medical officer in those areas only where educational provision was made. As a result of those restricted efforts there was no official knowledge of abnormal children in many areas, and even in the most enlightened only those marked cases falling into well-defined groups of blind, deaf and dumb, feeble-minded, crippled and epileptic, were discovered, and special education did not extend, generally speaking, beyond the scope of those groups. With the advent

of the School Medical Officer the number of children discovered as belonging to the groups already receiving special school education has increased, as in addition large numbers of new and formerly unrecognized cases have been brought to light for whom no special educational basis existed. A complete list of types revealed in the course of medical inspection would include the following :—

I. THE BLIND—

- (a) The totally blind.
- (b) The blind who, though possessing residual sight, may be expected to earn their living as blind adults.
- (c) The partially blind, including cases of high myopia, ophthalmia, diseases of the lens, cornea, conjunctiva and optic nerve, who may be expected to earn their living as sighted adults.

II. THE DEAF—

- (a) The deaf and dumb.
- (b) The partially deaf, including all those who possess residual hearing, but who require training in speech reading and articulation as taught to the deaf and dumb by oral methods.
- (c) The so-called “hard of hearing” children, including those who possess residual hearing, but who require training in speech reading, but not in articulation.
- (d) The slightly deaf.

III. THE MENTALLY DEFECTIVE—Including various degrees of feeble-mindedness and children who are mentally backward.

IV. THE PHYSICALLY DEFECTIVE—

- (a) Delicate children, including those threatened with tuberculosis, children suffering from anæmia, enlarged glands, malnutrition, chorea, etc.
- (b) Tuberculous children suffering from pulmonary or non-pulmonary (surgical) forms of the disease.
- (c) Crippled children, including children suffering from tuberculosis of the bones and joints, rheumatoid conditions, rickets, paralysis, cardiac disease, etc.
- (d) Children suffering from skin diseases requiring special educational measures, *e.g.* ringworm, favus.
- (e) Children suffering from ophthalmia.
- (f) The defective in speech (stammerers, motor and sensory aphasics).

V. EPILEPTICS—

- (a) "Severe and frequent epilepsy" as defined in the Elementary Education (Defective and Epileptic Children) Act, 1899.
- (b) Mild cases.

VI. INEDUCABLE CHILDREN — Including imbeciles, idiots, chronic invalids, etc.

It may be convenient to tabulate the various types of educational provision of the character under consideration, as follows:—

i. *Special Schools for children under 16* under the two special Acts referred to above :—

(1) Elementary Education (Blind and Deaf Children) Act, 1893 :—

Schools or Classes for the Blind and Partially Blind.

Schools or Classes for the Deaf and Dumb, and the Partially Deaf.

(2) i. Elementary Education (Defective and Epileptic Children) Act, 1899 :—

Schools for the Feeble-minded.

Schools for Delicate Children with definite defects (Open-air Schools).

Tuberculosis Schools.

Hospital and Convalescent Home Schools.

Residential Schools of Recovery.

Ophthalmia Schools.

Epileptic Schools.

ii. *Special Schools or Classes* under the Code and administered as elementary schools for children :—

Classes for mentally Backward Children; and under Art. 44 (g) of the Code, Summer Homes, School Camps, Playground Classes, Stammering Classes, etc.

iii. *Special Schools and Classes for abnormal pupils over 16* under the Technical School Regulations. At present these are confined to Schools for the Blind, the Deaf, the Physically Defective, and Epileptic.<sup>1</sup>

It is the duty of the School Medical Officer to seek out cases of incipient blindness, etc. The

<sup>1</sup> Report of Chief Medical Officer of the Board of Education for 1911-12.

School Medical Officer is the forerunner of an enlightened preventive policy which shall seek out cases of destitution of whatever sort, and deal with them whilst they are yet in a tractable stage. Routine medical inspection carried out at infrequent intervals is not sufficient. The School Medical Officer must join forces with all the agencies available which have an interest in the upbringing of the child. During the last few years, under the Board of Education, a large number of special schools have been established. To-day, there is accommodation in all for over 25,000 children at special schools. Half this provision is for mental defectives; there is room also for over 2000 blind, over 4000 deaf, nearly 5000 physically defective, and a few hundred phthisical and epileptic children. In 1911 there were thirty-eight schools for the blind, with a total average number of 1705 children on the register and accommodation for nearly 600 more. The gross cost of maintenance varies a great deal, and the Board of Education has found it impossible to arrive at a close estimate, as there are often adults and children at the same institution. In residential schools, however, the cost per child seldom exceeds £1 per week, and is sometimes considerably lower. A good deal more money is nevertheless required; the Board of Education finds that a better class of teachers is becoming

necessary and consequently the outlay per child is rising.

“The only important after-care association for the Blind is the North of England Union of Institutions, Societies and Agencies for the Blind, with headquarters at York. The Union, working through its organizing secretary, Miss Sadgrove, attempts to co-ordinate the work of the six northern counties. It has been able to secure the co-operation of the schools (8), workshops (19), homes for the blind (9), and visiting associations (26) within this area. Prevention of blindness and employment of the blind are the two main objects of the Association. Though it has been in existence six years no statistical return of results is available, but in view of representations made to the governing body these may be forthcoming in future years. There is otherwise no means of measuring the undoubted value of the work of the Association. The publication of returns would also furnish a stimulus to real activity of a similar kind in other parts of the country.”<sup>1</sup>

To many social workers the limited opportunities for assisting persons afflicted by blindness, etc., will be a matter of sorrow, but although, as in every other case, a great deal can be done by personal

<sup>1</sup> Report of Chief Medical Officer to the Board of Education, 1911-12.

influence, the effort made is not commensurate with the result. In blind cases there is a large opening for philanthropists if the cases are treated in infancy.

Blindness is of two forms, either congenital or arising out of neglect of disease of the eyes.<sup>1</sup> This is, of course, largely provided for with the advent of School Clinics, but, as has been pointed out elsewhere, the "following-up" is a most valuable work for the philanthropist. In the *Annual Charities Register and Digest*, for 1913, Dr. Glascott states: "It has been distinctly proved in the large maternity and foundling hospitals of the Continent that the percentage of cases of purulent ophthalmia in the newborn can be materially diminished by simply cleansing the eyes of all children with clean water as soon as they are born. More recently the number of sufferers has been further diminished by the use of antiseptics, such as weak solutions of boracic and salicylic acid, a two per cent. solution of carbolic acid, however, giving the best results. As a further development of the preventative plan of treatment, the method of Crede has been introduced. It has the merit of being extremely simple

<sup>1</sup> Through the investigation of the Ophthalmological Society it is proved that 30 per cent. of the inmates of schools for the blind have become so from purulent ophthalmia, and about 7000 persons in the United Kingdom have lost their sight through this cause (*Digest*, Introduction, clxxvi).

and very efficient. It consists in washing the infant's eyes with pure water as soon as it is born, and then by means of a drop-tube instilling a single drop of two per cent. solution of nitrate of silver into the eyes. This simple method of prevention should be known to, and be carried out by, every midwife in the country, and, what is more, parents should insist upon it being done."

Beyond this invaluable inspection of weak-eyed children and the heartening influence the voluntary worker can give, there is little that can be undertaken, for the Guardians of the Poor have special rights in dealing with the blind, deaf and dumb. Indeed, the granting of a relief to an afflicted spouse does not render the partner of the union a pauper, and the relief is recognized as being granted entirely to the recipient and in no way disenfranchises. This, of course, does not apply if there are means sufficient for maintenance.

It will also be held by many social thinkers that although they recognize that the presence of these afflicted types is one that demands consideration, at the same time they believe that the number of persons so afflicted is relatively so small, and yearly decreasing, that there are other problems more pressing in their demand for attention. In the face of so complex a problem as the social question, the reformer must inevitably turn to those phases



which will have the most radical and sweeping results, and so although one's sympathies are perhaps more aroused by the blind, and the deaf and the dumb, they are not of the very highest importance in the relative merits of those one would seek to serve first. At the same time it must not be thought that this phase of the problem is underestimated or their demands put in too lowly a fashion.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is too often believed, and, as I think, erroneously, that the marriage of afflicted people, such as deaf mutes, is an evil thing to the State. This doctrine is held by those who believe too implicitly in what is popularly supposed to be eugenics; and although, of course, instances of unfortunate results of such marriages can be found, as indeed they can also be found in more normal ones, it would appear that a union of two deaf mutes is certainly preferable to the union of a normal person and a deaf mute. But the point which requires emphasis is that at present too little is known of the science of eugenics to warrant any definite statement which would be in any degree authoritative.—W. F.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE PROBLEM OF THE CHILD

THE welfare of the children of the poor is, like that of the sick, split up amongst various public authorities whose functions to a large extent overlap. The authorities in question are the educational bodies which in England and Wales look after the needs of over six million elementary scholars; the Poor Law, which deals with children in various ways to be described later; and the police, who maintain large numbers in reformatory and industrial schools.

The education of children under the specific education authority is undertaken by county councils and county borough councils, while the larger urban and rural district councils may, if they desire it, become authorities for elementary education. We quote here a statement taken from a paper published by the London County Council, relating to the attendance at school of children. This will convey an idea to the social worker of the fundamental requirements of the Education Acts, and of the responsibilities of parents and employers under these Acts.

A child between 5 and 14 years of age must attend a certified efficient school during the whole time for which such school is open.

*Exceptions*—1. A child between 12 and 14 years of age is not required to attend school, if such child shall have received a certificate from one of His Majesty's Inspectors that it has passed the seventh standard.

The following are reasonable excuses for the non-attendance of a child at school :—

- (a) That the child is under efficient instruction in some other manner.
- (b) That the child is prevented from attending school by sickness or any unavoidable cause.
- (c) That there is no Public Elementary School open which the child can attend within two miles.

The parent or guardian of any child who ought to attend but does not attend school, is liable, upon conviction, to a penalty not exceeding, with the costs, 20s. for each offence.

No person, parent or other, may take into his employment any child under 14 years of age, unless such child, being between 12 and 14 years of age, shall have obtained a certificate that it has passed the seventh standard.

The employer of a child who has not satisfied this condition is liable to a penalty not exceeding 40s. for each offence.

Every education authority has an education committee. For the purposes of this committee there is a wide power of co-option; the co-opted members may number anything less than half the

whole committee. There must be women members, and councils are advised, when co-opting, to appoint representatives of bodies with educational responsibility and experience. This education committee is then the responsible body. Every elementary school must have a body of managers. These generally number six, of whom two are appointed by the education committee and four by the urban or rural district council in whose area the school is situated. At least two of the managers must be women. On this point we can echo the words of the *Annual Charities Register and Digest*, which says: "No better work can be undertaken by persons who care for children and wish to add to the *esprit de corps* and happiness of school life, and to take part in a most useful piece of local government." The duties of the managers are mostly consultative; no teacher can be appointed or dismissed without their consent. Much of their work and usefulness, however, depends upon the vigilance and initiative of the members. We shall now go on to describe some of the more recent developments in our educational system, which commands a large scope of activities for the voluntary worker.

In the first place there are the Care Committees. These are now established under the Education (Provision of Meals) Act, 1906, in order to administer free meals. At first, as will be remembered, school-

feeding was provided from charitable sources, but by degrees it came on the rates and extended from a few exceptionally necessitous areas to a far more general application. The London County Council in 1908 desired that these committees should not merely confine their activities to the feeding of the children, but should make a study of the general welfare of the children "in co-operation with their parents and all the existing agencies, befriending them in a variety of ways." Any person who wishes to become a member of a Care Committee (and this, too, we earnestly recommend to the benevolent) should notify his or her desire to the Secretary of the Local Education, from whom it passes on to the secretary of whatever joint organization all the Care Committees of the district have chosen to adopt. Feeding remains, however, the most important part of the work of the Care Committees.

In the Report for 1911 of Sir George Newman, the Chief Medical Officer of the Board of Education, the following conclusions are urged upon all in any way connected with the free provision of meals to school children: "To sum up, it appears, though the administration of the Act has in some areas been conducted on lines which in the main are sound, and with undoubtedly beneficial results to the children fed, there is a tendency on the part of a large number of authorities to regard the provision of

meals, if not simply as an undertaking in the nature of the relief of distress, at any rate as a thing apart and disconnected from their other work, whether educational or medical, and to imagine that so long as children in their schools, whose home circumstances are necessitous, are provided with meals, other considerations are of no importance."

It may be useful, therefore, to emphasise the following points:—

(1) The closest possible connection should subsist between the working of the province of the Meals Act and the School Medical Service. Malnutrition is a physical defect and one which by its nature predisposes to more serious conditions, *e.g.* tuberculosis, and as such it should be brought within the purview of the School Medical Officer. It follows that this Officer ought to be placed in direct relation with the School Canteen Committee, either by being appointed a member of the Committee or by some other means not less effective. In particular, it may be said that no arrangements can really be satisfactory unless the School Medical Officer—

- (a) Has the right to nominate for school-feeding any children found at the routine medical inspection, or on special examination, to be suffering from malnutrition, due to insufficiency or unsuitability of food.
- (b) Is always consulted as to the dietary provided.
- (c) Has the right and duty of inspecting the actual arrangements made in regard to the preparation, distribution and service of meals.
- (d) Is consulted in all cases of doubt as to the

necessity for retaining a child on the feeding list, owing to its physical condition.

The essence of the Act is that it enables education authorities to provide that no child shall be debarred by reason of lack of food from taking full advantage of the education provided for it. It follows from this that every insistence on a poverty qualification as the only test for admission to meals is unsound, since it is obvious that there may be cases in which, for one reason or another, children are, in fact, suffering from malnutrition, although the poverty test is not complied with. As its title shows, the Act is concerned with education. Any scheme, therefore, which neglects the educational and refining side of the work of feeding stands in need of revision. From this point of view the undesirability of feeding children at restaurants cannot be too strongly emphasized, any continuous and effective nutrition being practically impossible. This method is open to the further objection, that it will be impossible to arrange that the food given to the children should follow a dietary drawn up by the School Medical Officers. If, notwithstanding these objections, it is decided to adopt the system of feeding at restaurants, the use of a separate room or rooms for the children should always be secured, and the best arrangements possible for the food provision made.

In this connection it is interesting to remember Mr. Sidney Webb's suggestion made many years ago, that schools might well provide mid-day classes ; "Table manners, materials provided."

Efforts should be made to ascertain the effects of the meals upon the well-being of the children fed. For this purpose arrangements might advantageously be made to weigh the children, or, where it is not possible to weigh them all, a selected number, periodically during the feeding, or at least at the beginning and end of the period of feeding.<sup>1</sup> Detailed inspection of a selected number of children by the school doctor before the feedings begins and after it has ended would, of course, be still more useful. The experience so gained should be of great service in perfecting arrangements for succeeding years, and in placing the help of the administration of the Act on a sound, scientific basis.

. . . . .

In 1912 there was an increase of the number of authorities spending the money from the rates providing food and a corresponding increase in the total number of meals provided. Excluding London, the number of meals provided had risen to over 10 millions, while in London almost as many had been given. It is estimated that about 310,000

<sup>1</sup> For the younger children, a class for sleep after the meal might be advantageously instituted.



children were fed by local authorities during the year ended 31st March 1913, receiving on an average sixty-nine meals at a cost of about 2d. per head. Sir George Newman points out that "if it is correct, as has been estimated, that something like 10 per cent. of the total number of children in attendance at public elementary schools, or, say, 600,000 children, are suffering from malnutrition, it will be seen that roughly one-half of this number are at present being fed for a longer or shorter period under the Act."

The next great development has taken place in connection with the medical care of school children. Under the Elementary Education (Blind and Deaf Children) Act, 1893, provision is made not so much for medical treatment as for special educational facilities. The Elementary Education (Defective and Epileptic Children) Act, 1899, gives the term "physically defective" a wide interpretation. Under this Act, therefore, we have the care of "cripples, children suffering from tuberculosis disease, or any other physical condition that may render them unfit to attend the ordinary school." This Act, although it does not specifically sanction treatment, enables the education authority to provide special treatment. Such schools, if constructed on open-air principles, provide of themselves a form of treatment that is at least ameliorative, if not in every case curative. It is difficult, of course, except in large

educational centres, to provide special schools, and so we find that, to a large number of ailing children, open-air education is not available. The Education (Administrative Provisions) Act, 1907, however, gives education authorities "the power to make such arrangements as may be sanctioned by the Board of Education for attending to the health and physical condition of children educated in the public elementary schools; provided that in any exercise of powers under this section the local authority may encourage and assist the establishment or continuance of voluntary agencies and associate with itself representatives of voluntary associations for the purpose."

These educational authorities have also the duties of medical inspection. In the financial year ending on 31st March 1913, £60,000 was placed on the Education Estimates for the purpose of making grants towards the expenses of local education authorities in respect of the medical treatment of school children and purposes ancillary thereto, on the basis of a circular issued by the Board of Education on 1st April 1912 to all education authorities. During that year 229 out of a total of 317 local authorities shared in the grant for medical treatment. The largest grants made were—London, £12,958; Sheffield, £1402; Derbyshire, £1315; and Bradford, £1000. During the year there were 1111 Medical Officers (part and full-time) engaged

in the School Medical Service, including 82 women. In addition to these there were 742 school nurses, not including a large number indirectly engaged. 167 of the Educational Authorities of England and Wales—that is, just over half—have now undertaken one or more forms of treatment varying from contributions to hospitals to special clinics. In Scotland, for the year ending 31st March 1913, the Scotch Education Department made a grant of £7500.

To social workers of all classes there should be little need to explain and to convince of the utility and the necessity of school clinics. “The State has been slow to recognize the potential value of the healthy child as the unit and basis of communal health and well-being.” These words of Sir George Newman put the case for the whole system of free medical treatment. Treatment clinics, sanctioned by the Board of Education, were on 31st July 1913 to be found in ninety-seven areas (controlling, in all, over 140 clinics). The diseases treated are many; in some places the treatment is confined to teeth (*e.g.* Folkestone, Leeds); in others, ears, eyes, nose and throat ailments and skin diseases are dealt with (Bradford, St. Helens). Dental disease is receiving more attention, and upwards of eighty dental clinics are now in operation. Each year sees much more deliberate remedial action taken, and the offer of

financial assistance will certainly lead to a much more rapid development on these lines than in the past.

But suppose there are no school clinics in any district and the social worker has noticed the familiar signs of bad teeth, defective eyesight, ring-worm and the rest: what is to be done to get one started? An examination of the history of school clinics in this country shows that by far the greatest number of them have come into existence on the initiative of private individuals, not of public bodies.<sup>1</sup> Thus in some places local doctors started the clinics, or a gift of a few hundred pounds was secured, and the upkeep depends on voluntary donations. Local Health Societies, Church workers and Provident Dispensaries have all started clinics. But in most cases voluntary subscriptions remain to this day the principal sources of income. In many cases schemes were financed at first by private individuals and later were taken over by the local education authorities. Dental treatment is the most common of the many treatments provided, and is run close by eye clinics and centres for the treatment of skin diseases. Many general clinics exist, such as at Bradford, where almost every class of complaint, from the cure of stammering to X-ray treatment

<sup>1</sup> See *The School Clinic, At Home and Abroad*, by Lewis D. Cruickshank, by far the best book on the subject.

for skin diseases, is provided. This clinic came into existence in 1908 ; the professional staff now consists of three doctors, one dentist and two nurses.

Closely connected with school, and identical in principle, is the provision of open-air education, a movement that is not only being used as a remedial measure, but is also likely to make a considerable difference before many years are over in the nature of school architecture. Carnarvonshire County Council has led the way in providing schools in which the most drastic open-air treatment can be given, and which at the same time can be converted into ordinary school buildings in the event of bad weather.

We now pass on to another great development of the work of local education authorities, which, too, provides special opportunities for social workers. Every year about half a million boys and girls leave the elementary schools at an age in the neighbourhood of fourteen. As many as 62,000 of these children are Londoners. Very many of these have no particular prospects when they leave school. There are very many openings for a boy of this age ; he gets a job, unskilled and uneducative ; he earns up to 10s. a week ; he learns nothing, and when he arrives at years of manhood, in too many cases he finds himself unable to command a man's wage. For the lack of a little supervision and

direction many thousands of lads gravitate into the ranks of casual labour with its accompanying under-employment, under-payment and general demoralization.

The Education (Choice of Employment) Act, 1910, was passed to enable county and county borough councils "to make arrangements, subject to the approval of the Board of Education, for giving to boys and girls under seventeen years of age assistance with respect to the choice of suitable employment, by means of the collection and communication of information, and the furnishing of advice." Under this Act, Juvenile Advisory Committees may be established to act as a link between the Labour Exchange and the School. In Leeds, in 1912-13, such a Committee placed in employment 1859 boys and 1748 girls out of a total of 7216 applicants: a small proportion perhaps, but satisfactory in the sense that the great majority of those placed in jobs stand a strong chance of staying in them permanently. The Education Authorities which have availed themselves of the provisions of this Act generally issue specific instructions to Advisory Committees, of which the social worker interested in this branch of work should obtain a copy and study it in connection with the Byelaws under the Children Act, 1908. Perhaps it may be as well to state that here, more than

anywhere in the whole field of social work, the utmost tact is necessary. The member of the Juvenile Advisory Committee who would be of use must behave in such a way as to be regarded as a friend of the families with whom he is dealing—and with good reason.

We can here only draw attention to the ever-increasing supervision of birth and infancy by the local health authorities. This takes many forms, of which the most general are the provision of midwifery, of hygienic medical advice, and of milk, either gratis or for a small sum. We venture to predict, however, that the next step in this direction will be the formation of Baby Clinics. Already there exist a few Schools for Mothers, such as the St. Pancras School for Mothers, the Birmingham Infant's Health Society, and the School for Mothers in Manchester; and the Women's Labour League is on its own account organizing the establishment of a few more. By means of "Infant Consultations" advice is given to individual mothers as to the feeding, clothing, etc., of their babies, while the babies themselves are periodically weighed and examined, a record being kept of their physical condition. We must look to such means to cause, within a few years, a substantial diminution of infantile mortality. Although the infantile mortality rate has fallen considerably during the last seventy

years, it has not managed to keep pace with the decrease in the total death-rate.

We now pass on to the treatment of children under the Poor Law. The number of children under the Poor Law is in the neighbourhood of a quarter of a million for the whole United Kingdom. The cost of their maintenance may be estimated at something just over £2,000,000 a year, a figure which should be compared with the £30,000,000 or thereabouts that is being spent by the education authorities of England and Wales alone. The Report of the Poor Law Commission of 1834 recommended that for all the children under the Poor Law, whether living with their parents or orphans, there should be provided entirely separate educational institutions. This, however, was ignored by those to whom the administration of the Poor Law Amendment Act was entrusted, and the children of paupers remained in the workhouse. Of all the children under the Poor Law perhaps half are of school age and maintained on outdoor relief. Investigators appointed by the Poor Law Commission of 1905-9 reported that very large numbers of these children were growing up, at the expense of the State, under conditions which, to say the least, were discreditable to the nation. Perhaps ten or twenty thousand, it is estimated, "are being subjected to the influences of parentage and homes



of dissolute or immoral character. The condition of the children on aliment in the large towns of Scotland is, in this respect, quite as bad as that of the outdoor relief children in England and Wales.<sup>1</sup>

It is difficult to generalize on the treatment of children under the Poor Law, especially those receiving indoor relief. The methods in which they are treated are many, and a little attention of the right kind may make all the difference to a child's happiness. A few thousand children are still in the workhouses of England and Wales and the poor-houses of Scotland, more or less completely separated from the adult inmates.

The whole question of children under the Poor Law is complicated by the varying points of view of the Boards of Guardians. The curious antipathy on the part of the Local Government Board to circularize on the subject of the adequate treatment of children who are taken into the workhouse largely arises from the fact that, like every government department, its outward and visible sign is a close adherence to the supposed conventions. It appears to regard children taken into the workhouse as brats worthy of no further consideration. And this is not to put the matter too strongly, as a circular speeding up the weaker Boards to the level of those

<sup>1</sup> Minority Report of the Poor Law Commission, Chap. IV. (A).

like Bradford would be not only beneficial, but economical in the long-run.

In Bradford the system is very simple and very efficient. No child enters the workhouse at all. As soon as they are received into the hands of the Guardians of the Poor they are transported to a central clearing home, annexed to the workhouse, unless, of course, they are under the age of two years old. For these latter there is the nursery in the workhouse infirmary, where they are attended by their own mothers. For the elder, first of all there is a period of quarantine, and after this has been safely passed they become inmates of a central home until such time as a scattered home shall be found for them. In the central home they attend the usual school that they used to attend before they entered the workhouse.

In each scattered home are eight boys and eight girls of varying ages. These are administered by specially picked and trained nurses, or foster-mothers, and supervised by the head of the central home. Every step is taken to obtain the real home atmosphere, and considerable foresight is shown in the management, and even details like individual taste in dress are catered for. This appears to be the most efficient way of dealing with the children who are taken into the workhouse. But to many Boards of Guardians the expenditure of money is

a deadly sin, and they cannot conceive that a thorough and comprehensive scheme can be carried out at a comparatively trifling cost. It is also of interest that in Bradford 770 children have been adopted under the Poor Law Act of 1899, with the most highly gratifying results.

But Boards of Guardians as a whole are most obtuse upon the desirability of adoption. There is still a current belief, entirely erroneous, that the adoption of children by the Guardians will eventually mean the entire shifting of what is called parental responsibility on to their shoulders. This view is as equally fallacious as that which many people hold that the granting of maternity benefits to unmarried mothers will see a vast increase in the numbers of illegitimate children. There are several psychological arguments which suffice in keeping the number of children adopted by the Guardians at a low level.

In spite of the protestations of social workers and the generally capable way relieving officers do their work, there is still a very real dislike to Poor Law relief in practically every class of working people. As this is true even about outdoor relief, it applies *a fortiori* to the adoption of children; for the family circle is, on the whole, the pivot of working-class life. Besides these points, Boards of Guardians are often too engrossed with the everyday side of their work,

to the neglect of the view that the expenditure of a small sum for, say, six years will in the long-run save the rates to the extent of hundreds of pounds. But the most potent argument against adoption being undertaken in wholesale numbers is that, as yet, no scheme has been worked out, either with the Labour Exchanges or with emigration authorities, for really promising openings for the children so adopted. It is true, of course, that many of the adopted children do far better than their luckless unadopted brethren, but until the opportunity of really remunerative careers are made easier there will not be wholesale adoption. Indeed even now the Guardians too often are on the side of refusing adoption.

For the voluntary social worker the problem of the children provides at once the most interesting and inspiring work. For in no other phase of the problem are the results so clearly or so quickly seen. With the number of school clinics increasing, with a more advanced policy by the Boards of Guardians, the voluntary social worker will find many opportunities of supplementing their work in a way which they themselves are quite unable to do, and which yet adds the necessary finishing touches to their work. Every school clinic could with advantage be staffed by a large number of voluntary "followers-up" of cases. If the clinic is really undertaking its work

in a district, it is practically impossible for the doctors to see that their instructions are carried out.<sup>1</sup> But with a band of voluntary helpers, supervised by a trained nurse or so, there is every reason to believe that the good results of a school clinic could be doubled.

This also applies to the infant consultations and milk depots; even, indeed, to the voluntary helper relieving the mother at times by taking the child herself to the consultations. And their use as visitors for the children whose parents have gone into the workhouse can be equally great.

We now pass on to the care of the children under the Police Authority. On 31st December 1911 there were 44 reformatories, 1 of which was a ship; 145 industrial schools, of which 13 were special schools and 6 were ships; and 20 day industrial schools and 10 short-term industrial schools. The total number of boys and girls in these institutions in England and Scotland at the same date was nearly 29,000. In 1851 and 1853 conferences were held of persons interested in the questions of juvenile crime, which led to the establishment of several reformatory schools and of the first Reformatory Act, 1854. The original idea, therefore, was that

<sup>1</sup> It is of great practical importance that at least one doctor to each clinic should have the full powers of a M.O.H.

the reformatory should provide a substitute for imprisonment, and these institutions were, in fact, inspected by an Inspector of Prisons. The industrial school movement originated about the same time in the ragged schools, started by Lord Shaftesbury, Dr. Guthrie and others. The original distinction between the two classes of institution is now well on its way to extinction; both suffer from the odium which naturally attaches itself to anything connected with the police. Children are committed to these places by a magistrate's order; the law on the subject, as codified, is contained in Part IV. of the Children Act, 1908. Many of these schools are governed by voluntary committees of managers, others are directly under county or county borough councils. The Home Office, as the police department, inspects and certifies.

A few months ago a Departmental Committee on Reformatory and Industrial Schools presented a report, which was by no means unanimous. So far as there is an opinion on the subject, the transfer of the schools from the Home Office to the Education Office appears to be in favour—certainly the Home Office is the wrong body to entrust with educational responsibility. In giving evidence before the Committee, Mr. Aitken, a principal clerk in the Home Office, stated that the department that was dealing with these schools was “over-weighted with other

work." It is one of those maid-of-all-work departments to which are transferred all the duties that are not the specific property of any particular Government office. The chief inspector of reformatory and industrial schools, in giving evidence before the Committee, stated that reformatories are for youthful offenders between twelve and sixteen years of age on admission, while industrial schools are for children under fourteen years of age on admission. All but twenty of the ordinary industrial schools are under voluntary management.

The establishment of special industrial schools for mentally and physically defective children in the last few years has helped to relieve the industrial school of some of the worst cases. Ships have certain attractions, and local authorities often show a preference for them, and magistrates at their instance are apt to send quite unsuitable cases. The education includes industrial training, and is stated to compare favourably with any other class of schools. The girls are trained with a view to being good and capable housewives, receiving an all-round training in needlework, cooking, laundry-work and dress-making. Here and there a girl displaying special ability is prepared for the teaching profession, etc. ; but very little can be done in this way, as the children, as a rule, have no home to assist them during the years of apprenticeship. The great majority, of

necessity, go to domestic service as a start in life. A great deal has been left to the discretion of the managers as regards dealing with the parents (who are the principal difficulty) of the boys and girls in the schools.



## CHAPTER X

### THE CHARITY COMMISSIONERS AND ENDOWED CHARITIES

A CHARITABLE trust is generally formed with one specific purpose: to remedy one particular evil, or to succour one particular class of afflicted persons. But, as we have seen, the field of charity is ever changing. Under the Statute of Charitable Uses (1601), for example, the relief or redemption of prisoners or captives from the hands of the Algerian pirates was prescribed as a charitable object, with the view of safeguarding charitable trusts. But when the Mediterranean was swept clear of the pirates' ships, what was to be done with the trust funds? In too many cases of this sort the trustees' own interests supplied the answer. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, the prevailing social disorder, and the sudden shifting of long-established custom and responsibilities, swallowed up a large number of endowed charities. Parliament, as usual, hesitated. Nearly seventy years of inquiries, royal commissions and the rest, elapsed before any legislation was granted. In 1853 the first Charitable Trust

Act was passed, under which the Charity Commissioners of England and Wales were appointed, and to them were transferred the powers which previously the Court of Chancery had possessed in respect of charitable trusts.

The powers of the Charity Commission are fully set out in the Majority Report of the Poor Law Commission.<sup>1</sup> They have power to examine and inquire into all or any charities, and the nature and objects, administration, management and results thereof, and the value, condition, management and application of the property ; to require accounts and statements of all trustees or persons concerned in the administration of any charity ; to require trustees and others to attend and to be examined ; to take evidence on oath, either by themselves or by their Assistant Commissioners. They have also to receive and consider applications for advice from trustees and others concerned in the administration of a charity ; and persons acting on the advice of the Board are indemnified.

The Commissioners have thus very large and independent advisory powers. They have powers also for preventing unnecessary legal proceedings on the part of charities ; and they may authorize proceedings, and, in their relation to such proceedings, they may have local inquiry made by their Assistant

<sup>1</sup> Pt. vii. vi. sec. 35.

Commissioners. They may empower the trustees of a charity upon satisfactory proof to discharge any officer who is negligent, unfit or incompetent. Upon representations made to them by the trustees they have power to make order under their seal for the granting of leases, and for the making of roads, laying down of drains, building or repairing, rebuilding or removal of houses, "although such leases or acts respectively shall not be authorized or permitted by the Trust." "Under special circumstances" also they may authorize the sale or exchange of the land of a charity. Through their agency the lands of charities may be vested in the Official Trustee of charity lands, and stock and securities in the official trustees of charitable funds (not to be confused with the Public Trustee); and the capital of the charity, whether land or securities, is thus secured in trust for the use of the charity, while the income is expended by the trustees themselves.

Subject to appeal, the Commissioners have also a definite and prescribed power of making orders. They may, for instance, remove or appoint trustees or make an order for a scheme. In case of abuse, they certify the Attorney-General with a view to proceedings. "They do not act on their own power; they are not a court of law, nor are they prosecutors in their own person; they certify the Attorney-General, and the Attorney-General has,

of course, full power to say, 'The Commissioners are wrong in this, and I will not proceed'; or, 'The Commissioners are making too much of a small matter, and I do not think proceedings ought to be taken'; but when the Attorney-General does move it is generally sufficient." The office of the Commissioners, therefore, is a centre of investigation and registration, advice and control. Indeed, we may say that where the voluntary charities are weak the endowed charities are strong. The latter have a centre for registration, the former have none. The endowed charities have, the voluntary charities have not, the advantage of an official trustee; and instances occur in which property purchased by voluntary contribution passes surreptitiously into private hands. For endowed charities there is a recognized centre for the receipt of statements and accounts, for the voluntary charities there is none. And besides these, legislation, we think, might produce many indirect results that would be very beneficial.

On the other hand, the work of the Commissioners is seriously limited in certain directions. It was never intended that the administration of large charities should enter into the work of the Commission, unless the trustees themselves applied for its help. "If the gross annual income of a charity, exclusive of the yearly annual value of any build-

ings or land used wholly for the purposes thereof, and not yielding any pecuniary income, amounts to £50 or upwards, the Commission can make no orders, except upon application of the trustees." Here, obviously, is a proviso which should be repealed. The Public Trustee is under no such limitations. There are further exclusions: the Commissioners cannot touch educational and religious charities, or friendly or benefit societies, or voluntary contributions to charities partly maintained by endowments.

The schemes of the Commissioners are generally applications of the doctrine of *cy près*.<sup>1</sup> By means of this a certain amount is being done to bring endowed charities into line with each other, but, as yet, little impression has been made on the vast agglomeration of miscellanea which we owe to the whims of philanthropists. Even to-day the stream continues. In the Report of the Charity Commissioners for 1912 we have a list of the 227 permanent charitable bequests made during the

<sup>1</sup> *Cy près* (Old French, as near to). In law, an equitable doctrine thus applied: Where there is an excess in an appointment under a power executed by will, affecting real estate, the court will carry the power out as near to the testator's intention as practicable, and prevent such excess disappointing the general design. This doctrine is not applicable to personalty, but is confined to wills. In regard to charitable legacies, where a literal execution becomes inexpedient or impracticable, the court will execute it as nearly as it can according to the original purpose, or, as the technical expression is, *cy près*. —*The Imperial Dictionary*, Ogilvie and Annandale.

year. This occurs in it: "Mrs. Catherine Petre, by Will, dated the 12th December 1906, gave (after the death of her husband, who died last year) a sum of £1400 Consols to the Bishop of Ely, charged with the payment of £1 a year to the Rector of Cavendish to be laid out by him in the purchase of cross buns, to be distributed yearly on Good Friday among the Sunday-school children, and their teachers, at Cavendish." The mediæval is with us yet.

The Commissioners have a busy time, notwithstanding their limited powers. The number of separate charities of which accounts were rendered during 1912 was 39,132. The total sum of stocks and investments held by the official trustees of charitable funds on 31st December 1912 amounted to £31,686,409, 2s. 11d., divided into 31,462 separate accounts. This sum was irrespective of 60,000 marks, 76,300 rupees, 3000 dollars, and £13,017, 2s. 8d. annuities. The aggregate income derived from the stocks, securities and annuities held by the official trustees of charitable funds amounted, for the year, to £902,388, 0s. 6d.

The Poor Law Commission collected a great deal of information from virtually every diocese in the country as to the effects of dole charities. The evidence was all one way: these charities were held to be demoralizing in the extreme. There is no

town that has not one, at least, of these charities; their total income must be an enormous sum—and its social utility is practically non-existent. The whole history of charity, as we have seen, has been a movement away from indiscriminate almsgiving towards the scientific and specialized treatment of each case on the lines of its own special necessities. But the alms remain. We venture to suggest that the Charity Commissioners should have power to make a wide use of the *cy près* principle by transferring the income of these charities to health and education committees for the encouragement of special hospitals and school clinics.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE PROBLEM OF THE SOCIAL WORKER

THE whole problem for the social worker is the centralization of effort and the co-ordination of that effort with the work of the municipalities and county councils. The vast importance of the social workers in work of the highest merit lies in their position as scouts to the army of progress. For them there is the ever-expanding field of investigation. It is not too much to say that practically all the great reforms which mark the epochs of social progress have been carried out by the enthusiasm of the amateur investigator in the first instance. This is the true function of the social worker, and to many it will appear the better part. But for a complete, full and efficient result to be lastingly maintained, the co-operation of the paid officials of the municipality or the county council is essential. The fear of bureaucracy is an idle fear if the scouts of the army are efficiently trained ; and the whole experience of late years goes to prove that the big Government departments are always willing not only to adopt the suggestions of skilled



investigators, but also to add their services to those of the present-day officials.

But the problem of co-ordination is not an easy one. The facetious definition of charity, "A's desire that B should assist C," is still largely true. Over and over again one is met with the story, "I shall be pleased to subscribe, but I don't want to hear about it," with the result in too many cases that people achieve the "unearned increment" of the glory of charitable work solely because they have the money to give. With so many people of this mind the task of scientific co-ordination is very difficult, for, simply from the financial point of view, it is impossible to organize lasting charitable effort on a basis of prejudice and illusion.

Another difficulty which besets this problem may be called "the pride of Charity." The excesses of unscientific enthusiasm have wrought more injury to the social problem than any other form of charitable vice. It is only human, we suppose, to assume that the work one is interested in is the best of its kind; but when that enthusiasm leads to antagonism and a fixed inability to co-ordinate with other societies and other workers, the result is inevitably chaotic and harmful. If the problem of social endeavour were as simple as this, it would have been solved by the multitude of societies that are ever in existence. It cannot be too strongly laid down that unless

every form of charity can be made to work hand in hand with every other form, no result can be obtained of lasting benefit.

At the time of the Dissolution of the Monasteries, it was found that the unscientific application of charitable effort had evolved a vast class of people dependent upon charity for their means of subsistence and support. The ancient religious habit of obtaining salvation for the soul by regular doles to the indigent poor may appear a romantic and kindly action, but in so gigantic a problem as the health of a State, in which money is obtained by luck, by chance, and in many cases by a person in spite of himself, as well as by honest labour, it has only one result—the perpetuation of a class upon which people can obtain salvation to their souls at a very cheap rate.

The eighteenth century theory, which has lasted to the twentieth, that all rich people are of a higher order than their less wealthy brethren, is the gigantic rock upon which the whole fabric of charitable effort wrecks itself time and time again. It is not too much to say that in England, at least where a cynic might discern the semblance of a plutocracy, this theory of excellence judged by the standard of bank balances is far too prevalent. The problem for the social worker is not *how* did this man become poor, but by what means can we assist this man to help himself from his present position.

And this leads to the cardinal vice of social efforts. In attempting to settle this problem upon a fitting and lasting basis, the social worker has first of all to fling overboard all preconceived ideas of morality, romance and class position. Unless the problem can be approached as a whole, it had better not be approached at all. And the problem can be stated in a single sentence. There is in this country a vast number of persons who for one cause or another, through their own efforts, or in spite of themselves, are not only a drawback but a positive sore to the State. Among this number are the sick, the old, the honest men that have failed, the good worker that can obtain no work, and also the drunkard, the lazy, the bestial and the criminal. But the problem is not solved if the result of charitable effort is that the sick are made well, the aged are looked after, and the honest man is found a job. There is still infinitely the more difficult part of the problem to be faced. That is why the cardinal vice of all charitable effort is the assumption of a watertight scheme of morality. The charitable person who is ready to give clothes and money and, indeed, love to an unfortunate legitimate child, and refuses the same to an equally unfortunate illegitimate child, is worse than useless. The Society which refuses to assist in a satisfactory way a poor person because of some moral weakness, had better not be there.

It is not suggested that money is the test of charitable effort: it is not even suggested that money has any connection with charitable effort, but it is definitely asserted that the neglect of the more sinful of those who require assistance invalidates the good work done in other directions. The truth is that there is no hard and fast rule for dealing with any particular case, and the danger to the social worker is that the more difficult cases often escape from their good intentions by the continuous effort required for permanent rehabilitation.

In this connection there are still more subtle psychological depths to be reached which it is not proposed to dwell upon here. Suffice it to say, that the outpourings and hysteria connected with what is called the White Slave Traffic are too often the business of the sexual pathologist to analyse. But in this connection a deliberate hit must be made at the suggestions by which too often the social worker is permeated by his paid secretary or official. The effusions which too many of these officials seem to consider necessary in order to obtain support and assistance too often declare their complete incompetence for their job. There is no connection between the social problem and "sentimental slush"; effusions which seem to be cousins-german to the ignorant rantings of religious fanatics. This is a danger of the nineteenth century which appears to be carried

over on the debit side of the account to the twentieth.

Now that the theory which must underlie social effort has been set out, it is of importance to criticize more in detail the various charities which exist in England to-day. Beyond doubt the Charity Organization Society is the greatest of these. To begin with, it was the first society to recognize the primary essential to charitable effort in the principle of co-ordination. By that it achieved the first step towards a possible solution to the social problem, and in its important investigations which it has held from time to time, it has proved itself true to its ideal and capable of invaluable work. Unfortunately its methods of investigation are old-fashioned and in many cases harsh, and it is inclined to rest too much on a high-bound morality and sentiment. This is more noticeable in the country than in London, where it has had the clear-sighted direction of Mr. C. S. Loch.

After the C.O.S., the Guild of Help movement must be accredited a second place. Because it is an evolution of the C.O.S., and is allied to the admirable German Elberfeld system, it has certain advantages over its parent. Its central idea is an admirable one. It demands from its voluntary helper personal intercourse with the recipient of the charity, but it fails by the fact that distribution of money is too

promiscuously undertaken. It has grasped the great principle that after scientific investigation the next great use of the voluntary helper is the "following up" of the work of the paid official of the municipality and the county councils. In investigation it adopts a broader basis than the C.O.S., but perhaps because of the youth of the movement it is not yet ready enough to undertake scientific investigation of really lasting importance. There is room for more co-ordination between these societies, and to a certain extent the vice of charitable pride is at the bottom of it.

In this chapter no mention has been made at all of hospitals. In the first place, because the whole connection between the voluntary worker and the sick poor has been treated in another chapter. Secondly, because the action of the voluntary worker in connection with the hospitals is very small indeed.

After the C.O.S. and the Guilds of Help the chief charities are those devoted to some particular object, such as the institutes for the blind and societies for protecting children. The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children is curiously akin to a Government department, with its paid inspectors who, even if they have no official status, yet act in a quasi-police function. The only fault which is glaringly manifest in the work of this

society (which co-ordinates with the municipal authorities in nearly every part of the country) is that, as it relies upon voluntary subscriptions to enable it to carry on its work, it must perforce indulge in a certain amount of advertisement, and as its work is before the general public, it often has to deal with certain cases in a more (or less) stringent way than is really necessary. But this society, too, has undertaken much investigation work, and there is no doubt that it has been responsible for the better treatment of children throughout the country.

Beyond the above-mentioned charities there are a large number of what may be termed *dole* charities. Prominent and rich people, desiring to perpetuate their name, leave money for the erection of almshouses, or for certain facilities for increasing the income of the indigent poor.

It is sufficient to say that many of these *dole* charities, though excellent in their intention, are sometimes harmful in their results; they are, however, less fashionable now than in former years.

To the social worker who has eyes to see into the future and the wit to discern modern tendencies, a great change can now be seen.

With the more scientific development of Government "interference," with the increasing specialization of the spheres of activity of the municipalities

and county councils, the social worker will find many and various new roads for the expression of his social effort. As we have tried to show, the time is rapidly coming when even if by form of revolution no change has been effected in the distribution of income, yet those possessed of less money than their luckier brethren will find the machinery of State so equipped as to provide them with the fair means of attaining their feet by their own efforts. This, indeed, will be where the true work of the voluntary worker will be seen at its best. For him, then, there will be none of the destroying influence of doling out money, the cure will be in the hands of properly appointed officials, and he will have the satisfaction of supplying the "spiritual stimulus" of comradeship for his "case." For here we touch upon the root of the matter, he will have to get rid of (and this is the root of the Guilds of Help idea) any false feeling of the good he is conferring upon his weaker brethren. Voluntary service is important, for the influence it brings, not only upon him that receives, but him that gives. Unless it is possible for the voluntary helper to approach the social problem in a humble and inquiring spirit, his work is entirely useless. If he thinks that he is conferring benefits from his lofty station, stretching down his hand to the weaker brethren, his work is in vain. That is too much the spirit of philanthropy in the twentieth



century. But only if he can realize that he is meeting a person of equal capacity to himself and that the advantages to be obtained therefrom are reciprocal, then only will he achieve any good result. The first essential of the social worker is to recognize that there are other sinners besides himself, "whether they wear a crown, a wig or some dirt."

As we see the future, the social worker has the hardest problem before him: for to him falls the task of supplying that "spiritual stimulus," that spirit of goodwill which will assist men on to their feet and lead them to better things. It is no easy task, and it can only be done by the exploitation of the higher side of the helper's own nature. It is a more difficult task than undertaken by the officials either of the Government, the municipalities or the county councils. It is for them to supply the material benefits; it is for the voluntary helper to supply the guiding spirit of the whole machine. With this and the field of original investigation there will be work for all to do, and it is our belief that this can only be undertaken by the development of the spirit of humanity, and by wisdom which is the result of optimistic introspection.

We believe also that there will be many willing and capable to undertake the work.

## CHAPTER XII

### MODERN CHARITY AND CRIME

No book on Modern Charity could be in any way complete which did not fully recognize the very profound influence the social worker can bring to bear upon the making and the unmaking of criminals. To many people the social worker often appears as "a common informer" of the worst type; a busy-body forcing his unwelcome presence upon the poor and compelling his forbidding philosophy by the fear of prison. There have been workers in the name of charity of this nature, and there have been (and are) charitable societies who have to employ the law to secure their desired ends. But the modern social worker is engaged in no such pursuit. He is concerned, first of all, in discovering the weak points of the law and seeking their amendment; secondly, in saving from the law those who, by chance of fate or chance of law, have been caught in its deadly embrace. Major Arthur Griffiths has said that two classes inhabit our prisons: "Those who should never have been put in, and those who

should never have been allowed out." In a single sentence there is provided for the social worker the most difficult of all his tasks—to separate the sheep from the goats, and to prevent the lambs from assuming the skins of the latter. This is also his finest test, for where the heart guides in matters of this nature it guides wrong. The head alone can decide. Sentiment, pity, charity are as nought compared to a knowledge of human psychology. That alone is the deciding judge, the supreme court of criminal appeal. And here, too, preconceived notions of the theory of heredity are of little avail. It has yet to be proved that criminals are a class by themselves, and that each child must carry the stigma of a criminal inheritance. Modern research goes to prove the contrary: Lombroso in many of his theories was wrong by reason of these same preconceived notions. But there are people who still cling to these ancient theories, as there are still people who believe that a bastard is a figure of shame all its days. It may therefore be serviceable here to analyse what is really at the root of this statement. In a country and a polity where introspection is liable to be regarded as the outcome of an "artistic temperament," where the creeds of the fathers are good enough for the children, and where thought is too often considered "advanced," it is perhaps natural for the generality of persons to take

the line of least resistance and glibly condemn, as "acquired characteristics," traits which may arise largely out of environment. It is true that often a suicidal tendency is to be discovered in a family; this perhaps is an acquired characteristic of insanity, but history does not record many cases of generations with a homicidal tendency carried out in its whole terrible result. How often does the son or the grandson of a notorious murderer suffer the extreme penalty for a guilty deed? And murder as a form of insanity is the strongest case which the older criminologists can put forward. Cases of theft, blackmail, or arson may be discovered passing through the family record generation after generation, but this can be proved environment with no connection with inheritance at all. Crimes of murder and of perverted moral senses are attributable to inheritance, for they are connected with insanity; but if law-breaking is an inherited vice, millions of social workers have worked, and this book has been written, in vain.

Philosophically considered, if every criminal is the victim of inherited vice, our penal laws are ghastly in their inadequacy. It were better, indeed it were more humane, to execute every criminal upon conviction and destroy their offspring. Any person who (say) for begging knows the inside of a local prison-cell should, for the community's sake, pay the

penalty of the scaffold. But statistics and the modern humane methods of reclaiming criminals prove the contrary incontestably. If for the term "acquired characteristics" is substituted "family circumstances," the problem is found at once simplified. In the last report on Reformatory and Industrial Schools<sup>1</sup> the following illuminating table was included.

At the time of committal Family Circumstances were given in the following cases :—

	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
Illegitimate . . . . .	200	96	296
Both parents dead . . . . .	44	14	58
Father dead . . . . .	381	128	509
Mother dead . . . . .	412	166	578
Deserted by both parents . . . . .	134	63	197
One or both parents destitute or criminal . . . . .	211	185	396
Total .	1382	652	2034

These figures effectively deny the theory of criminal inheritance; indeed, the compiler of the statistics substantially supports the true theory of the connection of destitution with crime.

To the social worker no table of statistics could shed more light on this subject. The loss of the

<sup>1</sup> Fifty-sixth Report for the year 1912 of the Chief Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools of Great Britain (Cd. 7196).

maternal influence is responsible for more chequered young careers than any other reason, and this only proves what every one who has had dealings with the poor knows, that in no other class is the unit of the family so carefully maintained. The premature loss of the father naturally is responsible for the second largest batch of juvenile "criminals"; and the reason why the loss of both parents is responsible for so small a number is that the network of social endeavour is really so widespread as to catch and care for the children so bereft. The illegitimates rank high, for they too often have to fend for themselves.

The two most interesting headings in this table are the comparatively small totals under the headings "deserted by both parents" and "one or both parents destitute or criminal."

This is, perhaps, attributable to the fact that the children in this table are of school age, and therefore under the supervision of the School Attendance Officers, and their work, as a rule, is carefully carried out.

In another table<sup>1</sup> the children's crimes are analysed, and this, too, is of great importance in its connection with charity.

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 115.

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OFFENCES FOR WHICH YOUNG PERSONS (ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND) WERE COMMITTED TO REFORMATORIES IN 1912

Offence.	England.		Scotland.		Total.
	Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.	
Absconding with workhouse property . . . . .	2	...	...	...	2
Arson . . . . .	1	...	...	...	1
Assault . . . . .	7	1	1	1	10
Attempted unnatural offence . .	4	...	...	...	4
Attempted suicide . . . . .	...	1	...	...	1
Attempted theft . . . . .	2	...	...	...	2
Begging . . . . .	15	3	1	...	19
Burglary . . . . .	2	...	...	...	2
Cruelty to animals . . . . .	6	...	...	...	6
Embezzlement . . . . .	46	...	1	...	47
Escaping from person with whom placed on licence . .	1	...	...	1	2
Felony . . . . .	...	1	...	...	1
Fraud . . . . .	3	...	...	...	3
Gaming . . . . .	5	...	...	...	5
Gross indecency . . . . .	1	...	...	...	1
Housebreaking . . . . .	39	4	26	1	70
Indecent assault . . . . .	15	...	2	...	17
Indecent exposure . . . . .	1	...	...	...	1
Industrial Schools—					
Absconding from . . . . .	7	6	2	4	19
Breach of rules . . . . .	5	1	...	...	6
Larceny . . . . .	868	123	120	15	1126
Lottering with intent . . . . .	5	...	...	...	5
Malicious wounding . . . . .	3	...	...	...	3
Obtaining by false pretences . .	11	7	1	...	19
On enclosed premises for presumed unlawful purpose . .	9	...	...	...	9
Perjury . . . . .	...	...	1	...	1
Placing obstruction on railway .	1	...	...	...	1
Receiving stolen property . . . .	3	...	1	...	4
Shopbreaking . . . . .	21	...	5	...	26
Sleeping out . . . . .	8	1	...	...	9
Soliciting . . . . .	1	1	...	...	2
Suspected person . . . . .	1	...	...	...	1
Theft from person . . . . .	10	2	...	...	12
Unlawful possession . . . . .	5	...	1	...	6
Vagrancy . . . . .	13	3	...	...	16
Warehouse breaking . . . . .	17	...	2	...	19
Wilful damage . . . . .	5	...	1	...	6
Total . . . . .	1143	154	165	22	1484

Out of a total of 1484 cases in the Reformatories in 1912, there were only four crimes which showed more than twenty cases—1126 were cases of larceny,<sup>1</sup> 70 housebreaking, 47 embezzlement, and 26 shop-breaking: all crimes of romance and destitution; the desire for more money and to put into actual deed the brave stories which have been read. And this must always be remembered in dealing with youthful criminals, that very often what is adjudicated by law to be an offence against Society is in reality the natural expression of a sporting and romantic nature. The same spirit will take the son of a well-to-do person over the stiffest fence in the hunting field. Indeed, the real antidote for petty larceny is adequate playing fields and greater opportunities for healthy recreation. And it should also be remembered that larceny is often the act of a boy whose home is far above that of the loafer or vagrant.

A fruitful inquiry was made by Mr. Ct. L. Bruce, L.C.C., with the assistance of a barrister friend, which shows the close connection of education and crime.<sup>2</sup> They were struck by the large number of prisoners committed for trial at the Central Criminal

<sup>1</sup> It must not be forgotten that 94 per cent. of all crimes are those of stealing, burglary, and fraud. Vide *The English Convict*, p. 177.

<sup>2</sup> National Conference on the Prevention of Destitution, 1912, *Papers* (King & Co.).



Court who apparently left school before they had approached the highest classes. Indeed they were struck how rarely any of them reached *any* of the highest classes. Mr. Bruce gives the following table:—

Standard Reached.	Prisoners.		Left Board Schools Same Year.
	N. London Sessions.	S. London Sessions.	
Unknown . . .	15	3	...
Standard O . .	2	0	50
Standard I. . .	5	1	300
Standard II. . .	18	10	1,000
Standard III. . .	20	6	3,000
Standard IV. . .	11	3	8,000
Standard V. . .	5	0	14,000
Standard VI. . .	1	1	17,000
Standard VII. . .	2	1	12,500
Standard Ex. VII. .	0	0	4,500

This table gives the following striking result: Four-fifths of the children who left school were in Standard V. and upwards; seven-eighths of the prisoners had left school in Standard IV. and downwards.

The same results were obtained from further observed lists of prisoners. Thus, by the figures of the North London Session for the years 1909, 1910, 1911, 187 prisoners had left in Standard V. and upwards; 2049 had left in Standard IV. and downwards. Therefore nine-tenths of the prisoners came

from one-fifth of the scholars. At the South London Sessions for these same years 917 prisoners came from Standard IV. and downwards; 75 from Standard V. and upwards. It may be doubted whether the word of those inquired from can be trusted, but it must be remembered that 55 separate lists were drawn up with substantially the same results. The inferences to be drawn from these extremely valuable figures are many and various, but the most important of these is, as Mr. Bruce points out, that the majority of these were children of feckless parents; they were often absentees, and therefore difficult for the teacher to train and take an interest in.<sup>1</sup>

The significance of these three tables can be summed up in the one word "Home." That is the root of all the matter for the social worker; look at the home and the criminal is explained. But before this vitally important matter is dealt with it is important to gain a comprehensive view of what "crime" itself means. A crime is an offence punishable by law, an act committed against the existing law of the land. No social worker can afford ever

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Bruce has some important observations on the difficulty of dealing with children in schools who, by reason of absence or dullness, do not keep up with the other children of their own age.

Another important inference is the lack of connection between education and crime, when that education is well carried out. The only exception is, of course, the "gentlemanly" crime of forgery.

to forget the derivation of any word. He is concerned with facts and not with the meaning which any word has taken upon itself. Therefore he must never forget that the laws of any country are never static. What is law to-day may be repealed to-morrow with complete justification. No law is absolute in its complete righteousness. The crime of to-day is often the virtue of to-morrow; and so the justice of the real social worker must be tempered, not with mercy but with foresight. He must ever be prepared to discover what other people will not take the trouble to look for, the underlying human motive, perhaps the human logical sequence. He will ever find cause and effect entangled.

Much, too, of what is constituted crime is but thought too loosely or too cleverly applied. The clever and rich can always "drive a coach and four through an Act of Parliament," and it is for him to discern this same feat in the actions of the poor. Do not, however, let him approach the question seeking to find some excuse, some *apologia* for the friend he hopes to serve; let him rather sift the cause and seek some basis of regeneration, some ground for a more complete understanding. But let him never forget that more than half the inmates of prisons should never be there at all.

But how can the social worker judge of the relative merits of the so-called "criminal class"?

For his work lies amongst those who are liable to know most of the inside of our prisons. Sir B. Donkin,<sup>1</sup> than whom no one has a better right to speak, has given the following definite advice: "There are no special qualities, physical or mental, common to all criminals. The only important link between the study of crime and that of heredity is the fact that a considerably larger minority of persons with clearly appreciable mental defect, apparently of congenital nature, is found among convicted criminals than in the population at large. The notable number of mentally defective persons among criminals who are sentenced to penal servitude, and are usually the perpetrators of serious crime, impressed me at the outset of my prison work. Though it is difficult, and often impossible, to obtain an adequate history of the early life of these men, it is practicable, from inquiry and from study of the men themselves, to assert with much confidence that a significant proportion of them are of primarily defective mental capacity, or, as the old legal phrase has it, are '*a nativitate menti capti*.' This conclusion is arrived at, independently of their criminality, from positive indications of mental defect observed in their conduct, and, in some cases, from certain concomitant physical characters. This class of mental defectives includes criminals of many

<sup>1</sup> Harveian Oration, 1910.

kinds. They are, it seems, innately unable to acquire the complex characters which are essential to the average man, and according to their surroundings they follow the path of least resistance. This path is more often than not, but by no means always, the path of unsocial or criminal action.

“These statements about criminals will appear to be dogmatic, but are, I think, capable of proof.

“. . . This matter, indeed, is of importance, not because any serious students of this subject now accept the doctrine of the so-called science of ‘criminology’ as aught else than a mass of imperfect and unclassified observations linked together by untested hypotheses, but because this doctrine, so much emphasized by Lombroso, Max Nordau, and others, of the hereditary nature of crime, or, in other words, of the criminal king and social ‘degenerate,’ is still very dominant over the public mind. It is widely popularized at the risk of producing practical effects, not only by writers of fiction, but also by philanthropists, journalists, and public speakers on social questions.”

Here in a single page are a thousand fond hopes and convictions shattered! There is no science of criminology! The masters, Lombroso and Max Nordau, are dethroned! The helpful thought of the criminal class taken away! What indeed is left? Luckily, there is a gospel of much hope, a

gospel which Sir B. Donkin (as good as his word) helped to bring into existence. The first scientific inquiry that has ever been undertaken in connection with the criminal has been produced as a Blue Book, and it may be said to have revolutionized the whole conception of the criminal class. This book<sup>1</sup> shows the English permanent servant at his best. It compels enthusiasm in its subject by the spirit that the author, Dr. Charles Goring, radiates. Here, one has the feeling, was a man ably endowed to undertake the highest scientific work, for here is the cool brain of the analyst added to the enthusiasm of the fanatic. Nothing has been left to chance; every step in the progress of the examination has been proved over and over again. The inquiry has been allowed to go its own way unhampered by any preconceived theories. And so, for the first time, it is possible for all those who are interested in the occurrence of crime to take their stand on the firm basis of truth.

The history of "the science of criminology" is easily told. (But it must be pointed out again in passing that until Dr. Goring, at the instance of the Prison Commissioners, undertook his work there had never been a truly scientific inquiry into crime and criminals, so that this loosely used term was even unscientific in its application.) Criticisms of

<sup>1</sup> *The English Convict*, by Charles Goring. Wyman, 9s.

crime and criminals have been carried out by three great "conventional cliques of investigators . . . improperly known as three Schools of Criminology—the Classical School, the Correctionist School, and the Positive or Continental School of Criminology."<sup>1</sup>

The earliest of these, the Classical School, obtained its inspiration from Beccaria, an Italian philanthropist, who in 1764 published his famous work *Crimes and Punishments*, which had a profound result and was probably responsible for the reform of the penal code throughout Europe. The fundamental tenets of this school may be said to be that whereas all criminals were equally responsible in the eyes of the law and were justly punished for the crime they had committed, at the same time, despite their wrong-doing, they had a "natural right," which they shared with all other human beings, to be treated humanely.<sup>2</sup> The Correctionist School,<sup>3</sup> a later development of the Classical School, differed in one essential from its predecessor. It held that it was impossible to graduate the punishment simply by the crime committed without taking into consideration the age and mental state of the criminal.

<sup>1</sup> *The English Convict*, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>3</sup> For a complete statement of the tenets of these schools, see *The Principles of Anthropology and Sociology in their Relations to Criminal Procedure*, by Maurice Parmelee.

It is from this school that we have obtained the Reformatory System and the separate treatment of criminal lunatics and juvenile offenders. But the real dominating influence in the treatment of crime was the third, the Positive or Continental School. Its influence has been and still is the real actuating force of all penal codes to-day; particularly is this so in America.<sup>1</sup> Its founder was Professor Cesare Lombroso, and so far-reaching has the effect of his doctrine been as to make it essential to describe his philosophy in some detail. When scientific analysis has destroyed every one of Lombroso's theories, he will still be remembered as the first prophet to establish the fundamental human truth that "iniquity and righteousness depend upon what an individual is, and not upon what he does; the practical corollary of this truth being, that in dealing justice to him, we must understand the criminal both as he is in himself and as he becomes through the influence of environment."<sup>2</sup> It is not this truth which the modern inquirer into crime opposes but a doctrine which Lombroso expounded, the science of criminal anthropology.

The modern case against Lombroso is that he deceived himself, his countless disciples, and, indeed,

<sup>1</sup> The Reformatory of Elmira is the direct result of Lombroso's teachings.

<sup>2</sup> *The English Convict*, p. 12.



legislators all over the world, that he was a man of science. He certainly was not that; he was instead one of the greatest humanitarians who ever lived. It shows his complete misunderstanding of the meaning of science that he could believe himself to be a scientist. Indeed, in the most famous speech he made in his life he proved himself a better rhetorician than a man of science.<sup>1</sup> Whilst carrying on researches at Pavia he had come across the skull of a brigand with a very long series of atavistic anomalies. He proceeded in the manner of Livy, laying due stress on the portents: "At the sight of these strange anomalies, as a large plain appears under an inflamed horizon, the problem of the nature and of the origin of the criminal seemed to me resolved; the characters of primitive men and of inferior animals must be reproduced in our time." As Dr. Goring says, "The skull of that particular brigand, in the hands of Lombroso, has ever since been a menace to the spirit of sane criticism."<sup>2</sup> To find a single skull; to build on that a theory to influence the world; to subordinate subconsciously your intellectual honesty to find arguments to support your theory—can life hold more than that? It may be glorious, but it certainly is not science. But where Lombroso failed most fatally was in the

<sup>1</sup> At the Congress of Criminal Anthropology at Turin in 1906.

<sup>2</sup> *The English Convict*, p. 13.

absolutely unproven belief he held that the mental and physical conditions of man are closely co-related. With this hypothesis and his amazingly crude methods of investigation, scientific truth was impossible. To set out his theory in a single phrase one cannot do better than quote Dr. Goring once again<sup>1</sup>: "Literally, from top to toe, in every organ and structure of his body, from the quality of his hair at one extreme to the deformity of his feet at the other, the criminal is beset with definite, morbid, physical stigmata." The criminal is in every way a race to himself: every feature, every inch of flesh betrays the mark of the beast. Charlotte Corday's skull is responsible for this: "Not even the purest political crime, that springs from passion, is exempt from the law which we have laid down." Were Lombroso's theory correct, how lacking would be the curriculum of any school, without a complete teaching of his doctrine! And the gain to the State with every citizen an unofficial member of the C.I.D.!

The important difference in method between Lombroso and Dr. Goring is the real reason for their very different conclusions. Originally having a firm belief in anthropometry,<sup>2</sup> Lombroso rejected this for anatomico-pathological investigation, using

<sup>1</sup> *The English Convict*, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> The knowledge of man to be obtained by measurement.

it only "as the frame, so to speak, of the picture."<sup>1</sup> Considering his preconceived theory, his enthusiasm for his "atavistic anomalies," his crude methods of investigation, his rejection of the *precise* for the more rough and ready method of investigation is easily understood. It is of the greatest importance here to point out as definitely as possible that the social worker, being unable to be a complete specialist in every department of the work he has undertaken, naturally has placed reliance upon the official and, at the same time, commonly accepted point of view, namely, the adoption of Professor Lombroso's theories. Herein lies the whole essence of the argument. He must be willing determinedly to discard these long-held views and readjust his point of view to the discoveries made by Dr. Goring.

The object of this inquiry was to prove that either Lombroso's theory was right, or, if he failed to trace a criminal type, to discover the types of person who became criminal. Whether (and if so, how and why?) they differ physically and mentally, in health and disease, from law-abiding people, and to discover their antecedents, and their constitutional determinants and environmental conditions which led to crime? The method used was the most precise form of anthropometrics. No theory or hypothesis was commenced with, and no *special*

<sup>1</sup> Lombroso, *The Female Offender*.

result was expected. The number of experiments<sup>1</sup> made was sufficiently large to justify a fair normal result. And the sole basis of the investigation was that crime is included in the catalogue of common possibilities, and that the difference between the law-abiding person and the criminal is one of degree only. Dr. Goring's results are all statistical, and it is for that reason, since at the present time statistics are too seldom understood, that they will be summarized here. But it must not be supposed that *The English Convict* is for this reason dull and "dry as dust": it is one of the most exciting and absorbing romances ever compiled.

The first part of the inquiry was into "The Alleged Existence of a 'Physical Criminal Type,'" and the first step was taken, in the absence of suitable comparative data, by separating the statistics of the criminals under investigation into five groups, on the basis of the type of crime committed by each delinquent.<sup>2</sup> It was convenient, not only as it supplied, for the first time, reliable data as to the differentiations of the types, but also allowed the reasonable hypothesis, that as they differed in crime, so also might they be distinguished from one another in physical characteristics. The absence of these

<sup>1</sup> Three thousand convicts were examined by Dr. Goring and his colleagues.

<sup>2</sup> *The English Convict*, p. 38.

distinguishing physical characteristics would be strong presumptive evidence against Lombroso's theory of a criminal type. The types of crime chosen were as differentiated as petty larceny, murderous assault, incendiarism, sexual offences, and fraudulence. After a searching and precise investigation, there was found to be a complete absence of differentiating physical characteristics. Moreover, the comparison of fraudulent criminals with the general population provided such curious similarity in every way<sup>1</sup> that a more general investigation and statistical comparison between the general community and these five criminal types was undertaken. The chief difference found among the five types was that the fraudulent criminals were relatively ten years older than thieves, but, allowing for age, no physical differences of any importance could be found.

Comparisons were then made between the five types and 1000 male Cambridge undergraduates, and from this it was found that in correlation there was no difference at all, and in variability the difference was barely significant. If, then, it was true, as Lombroso held, that criminals were stigmatized with extreme degrees of physical characteristics, there should be a pronounced difference between

<sup>1</sup> The result come to was that "our fraudulent group of criminals forms an approximately representative sample of the well-to-do classes in the non-criminal population."

the criminals and the Cambridge men. (One cannot believe that the thousand Cambridge men were unfortunately criminals in the making! Though of course even those *in statu pupillari* possess "the criminal diathesis.") Lombroso's theory of anomaly, therefore, is refuted by facts. But to make the assurance doubly sure, further statistical comparisons were made with 959 Oxford undergraduates, with undergraduates at Aberdeen, with 25 of the staff of University College, London, with the result that, "in fact, from a knowledge only of an undergraduate's cephalic measurements, a better judgment could be given as to whether he is studying at an English or Scottish University, than a prediction could be made as to whether he would eventually become a University Professor or a convicted felon."<sup>1</sup>

But the most convincing proof of the complete failure of the theory of Lombroso was adduced with the further comparison of the five types with some statistics of a badly nourished and physically inferior class—the inmates of a general hospital. In the absolute measurements of head-length, head-breadth, and circumference of head, the five types were pronouncedly superior to general hospital patients. This is of course due to "‘shrinkage,’ due to illness and defective nourishment."<sup>2</sup> This comparison proves

<sup>1</sup> *The English Convict*, p. 145.

<sup>2</sup> J. Blakeman, *General Hospital Population*.

beyond dispute, even if the former comparisons did not, that Lombroso's theory was wrong, unscientific, and preconceived. This comparison effectively destroys the theory of the brigand's skull.

Now, with the mind cleared of the superfluous theories of believers in "criminology," the social worker can advance with the help of Dr. Goring to a more comprehensive view of the unhappy occupants of the prison, and a more hopeful belief that his work in assisting the flotsam and jetsam of the State to assist itself really is based upon a firm substantial basis. He next proceeds to discover if, since there is no distinctive criminal type, criminals differ in physique from the ordinary non-criminal population. To this query he finds sufficient statistical information to say definitely that they do: that in stature and weight not only is there a marked differentiation between the classes of criminals but between the criminal and non-criminal classes (excepting those convicted of fraud). Dr. Goring then leaves the field of statistics for the realm of theory, and produces evidence to show that this differentiation of stature and weight are "selective factors, determining to some extent conviction for crime."<sup>1</sup> This is indeed a most striking development of criminal science, and Dr. Goring goes so far as to point out that *tall* men in a community are, on the whole,

<sup>1</sup> *The English Convict*, p. 197.

least likely to commit crime, although he adds the important consideration, that in the apprehension of criminals it is a reasonable hypothesis that it is the smaller (*i.e.* the weaker) in physique who get secured by the police. To the social worker this deduction is of more than ordinary importance, for it means that the worker who is least endowed physically is driven to the wall—and crime. And here again it should be remembered that 94 per cent. of all crime committed in this country are thefts, crimes of acquisition: the most convincing tribute to the conflicting arguments of the connection of destitution with crime. If the doctrine of physique *selecting* crime is viewed aright, Dr. Goring's argument of the similarity of those criminals convicted of fraudulent crimes to the well-to-do non-criminal classes adds additional proof. For in these cases nearly every one was a first conviction, and occurred at that time of life (between 25–50) when most men have assumed very many domestic and public obligations which they will do almost anything to maintain. That sexual crimes are more frequent among men of small stature may also be attributed to the fact that both in the criminal and non-criminal classes taller men marry at a greater rate.

It must not be forgotten that children in industrial and reformatory schools have been statistically observed to be on the average one inch shorter and



several pounds less in weight than children of their own age in the normal schools. Dr. Goring, by further statistics, shows that there is a tendency for sons to inherit the diminutive stature of their father and their capacity for conviction. So that it may be that whereas there is a differentiation between the physique of those whose ancestors have possessed wealth and those who have lived in more lowly circumstances, there may also in time to come be an inbred physical inferiority among the classes who are more naturally exposed to crime, and that this differentiation may create and foster a permanent criminal class.

Dr. Goring's next inquiry is another which is of great significance to the social worker. At what age is a man most prone to commit his initial crime? That is, of course, a crime which has led to conviction. He shows that although age varies for different crimes (theft, sexual crimes, and injury to the person are done by younger men than arson and fraud), yet the average age at conviction is at about 22 years (the standard deviation is approximately nine years), and that the time between the ages of 14 and 32 represent the probable period of life for criminal enlistment. There are, however, three periods when it appears that the hitherto non-criminal person is liable to break out and be convicted of serious crime: between 20 and 25, between

35 and 45, and between 55 and 65. Of these three periods the second, that between the ages of 35 and 45, is most marked by definite crimes—wilful damage (including arson) and fraud are practically “middle-aged” crimes.

Earlier in this chapter was set out the family circumstances of children in the industrial and reformatory schools, and certain deductions which might be found to follow from these circumstances. It will be interesting, therefore, to see the statistical results of Dr. Goring, who made these same family circumstances part of his inquiry. But it must be pointed out that this section of his work is the least satisfactory, and that to a certain extent he has balked the question by neglecting how far these influences of environment are influential in bringing about the *first* step towards crime (and it is here that the industrial and reformatory school statistics are so valuable) and concentrated upon their influence upon *recidivism*.

As regards employment he finds that, generally speaking, convicts who have regular work upon their release from prison are the least likely to return, and that the unemployable (that is, those who generically are incapable of work) return more often than any other class, but the “voluntary unemployed” return again for longer sentences than any other class. But one important and unequivocal fact

arising out of this branch of the inquiry is that the shorter the convict's stay in prison has been the more regular has his after-employment become. Dr. Goring's investigations as to the effect of education upon recidivism are interesting, in the first place, because they recognize first of all the essential difference pointed out by Professor Karl Pearson between "formal" and "effective", education. "Formal education" may be taken to mean the kind of education received; "effective education," the results achieved by the particular education provided.<sup>1</sup> And the investigations show that there is no significant relation between "formal education" and recidivism. By further investigation he finds that "effective education" "exerts no influence upon the subsequent penal record of convicts." But at the same time it must be remembered (what has not been mentioned in this chapter before) that Dr. Goring lays very strong emphasis upon the influence not only of bad physical health, but also upon defective intelligence as one of the salient reasons for the committing of crime.

Professor Karl Pearson<sup>2</sup> and Mr. O. Heron<sup>3</sup> show that the first or elder members of any family are more liable to tuberculosis and insanity than

<sup>1</sup> *The English Convict*, p. 267.

<sup>2</sup> K. Pearson, *First Study of the Statistics of Pulmonary Tuberculosis*.

<sup>3</sup> D. Heron, *First Study of the Statistics of Insanity*.

subsequent members, and Dr. Goring finds that the elder members of a family are more liable to criminal conviction, and suggests a close connection between these two statistical results: that because there is this liability in the elder members of a family to disease of this nature, that this accounts also for their liability to criminal conviction.

Dr. Goring has provided in this book a vast amount that will be of the very greatest possible help to the social worker. He has cleared the ground of pernicious theories; he has broken the back of the pedagogues of criminology. He has done this in the best way known to science, by the most exact method of anthropometry. But he would be the first to admit that if the future is to correct the ideas of his book at all, it will be in the chapter relating to family circumstances. Here, it may appear unscientific to say so, we believe too little psychology has been admitted. What is the statistical co-relation of psychology and anthropometry? We have purposely dealt at length with the *The English Convict*,<sup>1</sup> for no book of late years is more calculated to clear the brain from the fluff of inherited prejudices and theories. We most unhesitatingly recommend it for the most serious consideration to every social worker. We have gone chapter by chapter through the book, and have

<sup>1</sup> *The English Convict*, p. 281.

suspended our ultimate criticism until his final conclusions, but we would say in passing that interesting as are his statistical figures in Chapter V., too much stress should not be laid upon his conclusions. We have mentioned some before, and here we propose to set forth those that we believe future investigation will considerably modify.

“The relative economic prosperity of the families wherein our convicts were brought up have had no influence, one way or the other, upon the frequency of their subsequent convictions for crime; but, measured by length of imprisonment, the influence of poverty has not tended to increase, but, if anything, appears to have acted in the direction of diminishing, the recidivism of these convicts.”<sup>1</sup>

“The age of our convicts at the death of their mothers, whether they were infants at the time or had reached maturity, was an environmental accident without any significant relation to their subsequent degree of recidivism.”<sup>2</sup>

Not only does he come to these conclusions as regards recidivists, but he has also sought to apply his statistical results to the star-class convict or first offenders. But in this we believe that he has enunciated a truth which renders the quotation above necessary of qualification. He admits “that

<sup>1</sup> *The English Convict*, p. 281.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 282.

an adverse environment is related much more intimately to the intelligence of convicts than it is to the degree of their recidivism or to the nature of their crime.”<sup>1</sup> The corollary of this statement is that family circumstances, being the cause of the mental defectiveness of the convict, are largely responsible for the lapse into crime. Dr. Goring also admits that the influence of environment may be much greater upon the criminal tendencies of first offenders than upon the recidivism of convicts, and that it does not follow that adverse social and economic conditions do not have an important effect upon the production of criminals in the general population. His most dogmatic assertion, and this, we believe, will be subsequently disproved, is that recidivism “is certainly not a product of any social and economic inequalities,” and that the particular nature of any crime in this country “has very little, if any, relation, apart from the relation of class, to any of these same environmental conditions.”

It is when Dr. Goring returns to the less intangible statistical review of the influence of heredity in the making of criminals that he again assumes his former interest, by reason of the excellence of his statistics. “The facts of human inheritance,” he says, “are really biological inferences from statistical facts.” And this we believe (though in no way

<sup>1</sup> *The English Convict*, p. 287.

agreeing with Dr. Goring that the statistical method is the *only* scientific way of approaching a scientific problem) to be a very fair definition. In a limited way, too, his statistics work out as one would expect, and, if the biological inference is not pushed too far, he provides some interesting facts for consideration. He finds that criminals tend to come from certain stocks in the country; that criminals do not appear to come equally from all families in the country, but from a limited section of the community. This is entirely in keeping with Dr. Goring's theory of a physically undersized stock resulting in criminality. His two most important conclusions are: "The criminal diathesis, revealed by the tendency to be convicted and imprisoned for crime, is inherited at much the same rate as are other physical and mental qualities and pathological conditions in man. And the influence of parental contagion, although varying somewhat in intensity in different conditions, is, on the whole, inconsiderable, relatively to the influence of inheritance and of mental defectiveness, which are by far the most significant factors we have been able to discover in the etiology of crime."<sup>1</sup>

We have entered at great length into the conclusions arising from the statistical inquiry in *The English Convict*. Every chapter (except those where the result was not directly with our problem)

<sup>1</sup> *The English Convict*, p. 368.

we have set out very fully, and noted that the conclusions are reached: What can the social worker gain from this new complex study of the criminal? What are the factors which differentiate the criminal from the law-abiding class? There is no such thing as an anthropological criminal type; the mental and physical constitution of both the criminal and the law-abiding classes, of the same age, stature, class, and intelligence, are identical, but the criminal class is marked by a defective physique in stature, body-weight, and mental capacity. These, then, are the deviations from the normality of the English race, and it is a reasonable hypothesis from this that it is *because* of this degeneracy in physique that these men became criminals. Dr. Goring goes so far as to say that if all the men in England were grouped into batches of thirteen, it would be possible each time, with a very great degree of certainty, to pick out the one criminal there should, on the average, be amongst them. The selection of the most diminutive in stature and body-weight would generally discover the actual or potential criminal, with this important addition—it would discover the criminal *most likely to be captured by the police*. It need hardly be said in passing that this last statement in no way disparages the police, and that it merely conveys the natural selection of the weakest, *i.e.* the least intelligent, criminals for apprehension.



We have been shown, too, that so potent is this deterioration in the making of the criminal, added to the acquired deterioration of alcoholism, syphilis, and their result, insanity, that social inequalities, adverse environment, and force of circumstances are almost negligible in the constitution of the inhabitants of prisons. Beyond this we are led to the fact that criminals are a product of the most prolific stocks, but they "share in the relative sterility of all degenerate stocks." The criminal *diathesis*, however, is influenced by the force of heredity in a similar way to the "physical and mental qualities and conditions in man." To sum up Dr. Goring's conclusions in a single sentence: "The comparatively insignificant relation of family and other environmental conditions with crime, and the high and enormously augmented association of feeble-mindedness with conviction for crime, and its well-marked relation with alcoholism, epilepsy, sexual profligacy, ungovernable temper, obstinacy of purpose, and wilful anti-social activity. Every one of these, as well as feeble-mindedness, being heritable qualities,"<sup>1</sup> go far to put for the first time the problem of the convict upon a scientific basis. And the crusade against crime can be conducted by (1) an effort made to modify inherited tendency by appropriate educational measures; (2) to segregate and supervise

<sup>1</sup> *The English Convict*, p. 373.

the unfit and thus modify the opportunity for crime ; or (3), and this is the solution Dr. Goring is inclined to believe in, "to regulate the reproduction of those degrees of constitutional qualities—feeble-mindedness, inebriety, epilepsy, deficient social instinct—which conduce to the committing of crime."

Dr. Goring has pursued his statistics in a masterly way, and laid down his conclusions with clearness and conviction. It is for these two reasons that the social worker must approach his results and suggestions with the greatest hesitancy. His inquiry is not complete ; it is an admirable inquiry which justifies a further inquiry. That, indeed, is what he set out to do. But if once it is believed that the anthropometrical method is alone and by itself the only method for studying this problem, the social worker, once again, has been destroyed by the Charybdis of Goring after a safe passage of the Scylla of Lombroso. To our mind, Dr. Goring has proved a general opinion that required proof, that there is no distinct anthropological criminal class. That is his great result ; the rest of his book is full of suggestion, and the one defect in it is that in his enthusiasm he has been inclined to state his results too definitely in the narrow limits of his inquiry. It is true that over and over again he asserts that he recognizes the limitations of his work ; but so persuasive is his writing that there is the

infection of enthusiasm always present. To push his results to the most flagrant extreme, as indeed the older criminal sociologists would have done, the problem of the criminal would be an easy one: every dwarf, every man under, say, five feet three, should be a suspect criminal; every man of six feet, a splendid social person. *A fortiori*, the ungainly giant is the noblest of men. This is absurd, and it is not suggested that this conclusion was what Dr. Goring meant; but the social worker is an enthusiast and *not* a specialist, and moderation is his most difficult lesson. The problem is so intricate, and the criminal *diathesis* is so universal, that the regiment of Life Guards and the Metropolitan Police must be as suspect as the most degenerate of physical types. And here a strong argument must be made for the psychological judgment of crime which, perforce, the social worker is compelled to take. In dealing with the needs of every case, however complete his information may be, he will be compelled to use his instinctive judgment as the supreme court of appeal, his knowledge of humanity as his ultimate arbiter. As in the police courts so much depends upon the demeanour of the persons concerned, so the social worker must make his decision. With *The English Convict* as a basis and, indeed, a warning, allied to his psychological knowledge of human nature (without which the social worker is useless),

there is hope for a more reasonable attack on the problem of crime. As we have said in another chapter, in this enormous problem the social worker is out to alleviate; all preconceived notions of religion, morality, social conduct, must be put resolutely aside. The problem is, firstly, of understanding, then of alleviation. Preconceived notions of the problem of crime—even those founded on Dr. Goring's book—are by themselves useless. Were the specialists left to themselves to settle our problems, this country would be impossible to live in. But a wise understanding of what the specialists seek, with a great deal of "the milk of human kindness" and human understanding, will go far to solve many problems which the specialists, for all their brilliance, would fail to bring to a satisfactory conclusion.

The problem of the criminal is not one of convenience. It is impossible for a country to decide to concentrate upon it for a generation and wipe it out for good and all. Destroy every delinquent and every potential delinquent and another crop will grow to-morrow. It is inherent in life and in any state. The criminal *diathesis* is one of the features of the mixed birthright with which every man is born. Organize society in the best conceivable manner, and if the percentage of criminals is lower than one in thirteen, a great advance will have been made. And, really, the wonder is that

in our curiously mixed and haphazard polity the percentage is not very much higher. But even now there is hope of the further elimination of crime. What statistics cannot explain because of their very nature, and for what no sufficient allowance of co-relation can be made, are the chances of human life. There is only a certain degree of knowledge in any one, and a technically unsocial act which may render a citizen, in the eyes of the law, a criminal, may not be in essence anything but the social act of a future generation and the too logical application of a badly worded statute. The whole problem of "the unwritten law," in the fullest meaning of that misused term, has never yet been adequately considered. And this is the whole triumph of human optimism, this criminal *diathesis* possessed by every one, for when he has nothing else left to hope for, the social worker has always this glorious belief in the triumph of man *per se* over the endless difficulties of life. It is this which has awakened the modern world to an interest in the child problem, and, as Dr. Goring sees, the investigation of the child criminal is perhaps the most urgent inquiry to be pursued. And it should be said here that, from all that one can gather, the treatment of criminals in general, and child criminals in particular, in this country is now undertaken on human lines and is progressive in its good results.

Where we cannot go so far as Dr. Goring is in the conclusion to which he has come for the treatment of this problem. How is "the regulation of the reproduction of the degrees of constitutional qualities which conduce to the committing of crime" to be undertaken?

It would appear that once again it is proposed to rely upon the, as yet, *entirely unproved* case for eugenics. We are to prevent the feeble-minded from procreation, but how can it be done? First of all, there is the test of a feeble mind, and once more we are compelled to bring forward the old argument that it is preferable to have feeble-mindedness, with all its horrors, *and* its glorious examples in literature, than destroy Keats and Shelley in the general prevention. We do not yet know what results are obtained from the breeding of mankind definitely enough to legislate about it. It is the same with epilepsy: the world is the better for its Napoleons, its Cæsars, its Dostoievskys, even though their existence is bound up with the existence of criminal epilepts. No, our knowledge is too meagre yet, and the genus "man" too subtle, to attack the problem in this way. But it is possible to supervise and segregate the most flagrant cases of the unfit, and this, in a rough hand-to-mouth way, is being done; but here there are dangers of the evil spirit of officialdom. Dr. Goring himself

is to a large extent responsible for our own optimistic conclusion. We implicitly believe that adequate and appropriate educational method will, in the first place, modify the *diathesis* in its most flagrant occurrence *if the problem is attacked early enough in life*, and if a conscientious scientific inquiry is made into the child criminal. The problem to us is the suppression of the criminal tendency in early life, and then concentration upon the problem of recidivism—a problem which, by that time, will be modified by the means taken for the potential criminal child.

The great lesson we would impress upon the social worker is one we have sought to emphasize all through this incomplete book. The problem of crime, like every other problem which besets him, is one which cannot be settled alone. It is part of his gigantic task. Gradually, with infinite patience, with untiring energy, with hope unimpaired, he may see at the end of his lifetime the least of all his hopes accomplished. That is his triumph, and that is all he must expect. He is engaged in an eternal problem which, perhaps, admits of no solution; but his work can never be in vain, for all improvement comes from within, and although there may be no tangible results, his efforts will have their subconscious effect far down the ages.

## APPENDIX

### PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATIONS

It may be of interest to set out here the basis upon which one of the best organized charities in England works. It is, of course, modelled upon the Elberfeld system of Germany. In presenting these excerpts from the Bradford City Guild of Help Case Book, we should like to take this opportunity of recognizing the good work which is done by the Guild of Help, and particularly in so alive and advanced a town as Bradford.

The field of all true charity begins, indeed, in the family, but it extends to everything affecting the life of the poor. The resources of the skilful Helper are never exhausted: groceries, fuel, clothes and cash are the least considerable part of them, as shown in the diagram printed in the Bradford City Case Book. In the centre is the Family Circle—our unit, itself containing forces for its own regeneration—surrounding it are ever-widening rings, each representing forces which may all be used in their turn by the Helper. The most natural and, therefore, the most powerful influences lie nearest the centre, and A, B and C in turn will be fully aroused before passing to the remoter circles.



Schedule of Forces with which the Helper may co-operate :—

A. FAMILY FORCES :

Capacity of each member—

Affection.

Training.

Endeavour.

Social development.

B. PERSONAL FORCES :

Relatives.

Friends.

C. NEIGHBOURHOOD FORCES :

Neighbours, landlords, tradesmen.

Former and present employers.

Clergymen, ministers, Sunday-school teachers,  
fellow Church members.

Doctors.

Trade unions, fraternal and benefit societies, social  
clubs, fellow-workmen.

Libraries, educational clubs, classes, settlements.

Thrift agencies, savings-banks, stamp savings,  
building societies.

D. CIVIC FORCES :

School teachers, attendance officers.

Police, magistrates, reformatories.

Health department, milk depot, sanitary inspectors,  
factory inspectors.

Disinfecting station, free disinfectants, whitewash  
and brushes (apply town-hall).

E. PRIVATE CHARITABLE FORCES :

Charity Organization Society.

Church or denomination to which family belongs.

Benevolent individuals.

National, special and general relief societies.

Charitable employments.

Cinderella club, children's summer holiday society, orphanages, day nurseries, society for protection of children.

District nurses, ladies' charity, hospitals, convalescent homes.

Poor man's lawyer.

Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society.

#### F. PUBLIC RELIEF FORCES :

Relieving officers, district medical officer.

Poor-law hospitals and sanatorium.

Fever and small-pox hospitals.

#### INSTRUCTIONS TO HELPER

1. In visiting a family, let the first object be to establish a friendly relation with all its members ; learn their interests and aspirations as well as their needs ; but make no undue haste to acquire their confidence, and always approach them with respect and tact. Avoid taking notes in the homes of the poor as far as possible. The particulars demanded in the Case Papers may be obtained, if necessary, by degrees.

2. All you learn about a poor family should be regarded as confidential. Unfavourable information especially should be used with great discretion, and its sources disclosed only to those charitably interested. Useful inquiries may be made in the neighbourhood now or formerly lived in, and of landlords and employers, but great care must be taken to put the inquiries in such a form that no injury shall be done to the person about whom you are asking.

3. Give no money or its equivalent to a family, even when evidently in need, but consult the District Head

as to the best methods of meeting the need. Remember always that the best gifts to the poor are self-respect and provident habits, and that one of the worst gifts that can be inflicted on them is the habit of relying on alms.

4. Keep in constant touch with your District Head, CALLING ON HIM for advice immediately the case has been visited, and going to him in every difficulty. Attend committee meetings as often as possible, whether you have cases for discussion or not. Your experience will help others.

5. A strong Helper must have the courage not to act until he understands the family. You must be prepared to see suffering and wrong-doing that you cannot prevent, and be willing to wait till you know what the difficulties and troubles arise from; then be ready to make the most of the opportunities as they occur. We come to realize after a time that in the case of many poor families no striking improvements in condition can be made immediately. There are some where the evils are of such a kind that it is plain they cannot be cured except by the persistent effort of the people themselves, which makes the outlook seem hopeless. It is precisely here, however, that you can be of use. You can lead them to believe the effort is worth making, encourage them to make it, and by personal influence may establish a better condition of affairs.

6. You are strongly urged not to give up your cases when they become self-supporting; some friendship may then point to fresh aims (some form of thrift or provision for the future), and may lead the way to a fuller and happier life.

Bear in mind the non-political and non-sectarian

nature of the Guild and avoid any attempt at proselytizing.

No information regarding the work of the Guild should be given for publication, except through the Central Office.

#### INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE OF CASE BOOK

1. This book is intended to show accurately every condition of the assisted person and of his relatives.

2. The Helper must fill in exactly all particulars demanded, and keep them continually in accordance with changing conditions.

3. It is important that he shall report any circumstances he may notice which are not specially inquired for, but which may be of assistance in considering the case.

4. This Case Book must be presented at the District Meetings and left with the District Head when any remark has been added. When the case is no longer visited, it must be returned to the Central Office.

5. This book should not be taken to the homes of the people, but where notes are required they should be made in a rough notebook.

6. Dates should be written in figures, thus : 29.3.05. Reports should be made in a few clear words.

#### REPORT OF HELPER

This is the only record of your work. Every visit should be recorded, whether to the home, employer, or to those who might assist. Enter every gift, however small, and record all advice given. When the income

fluctuates, try to elicit each week both gettings and spendings.

Report fully, but as briefly as possible.

	Date.

#### DECISION OF DISTRICT COMMITTEE

A decision should be entered at every meeting, giving detailed instructions to the Helper, and indicating the policy to be pursued.

Income.	Relief.	Signed.	Date.

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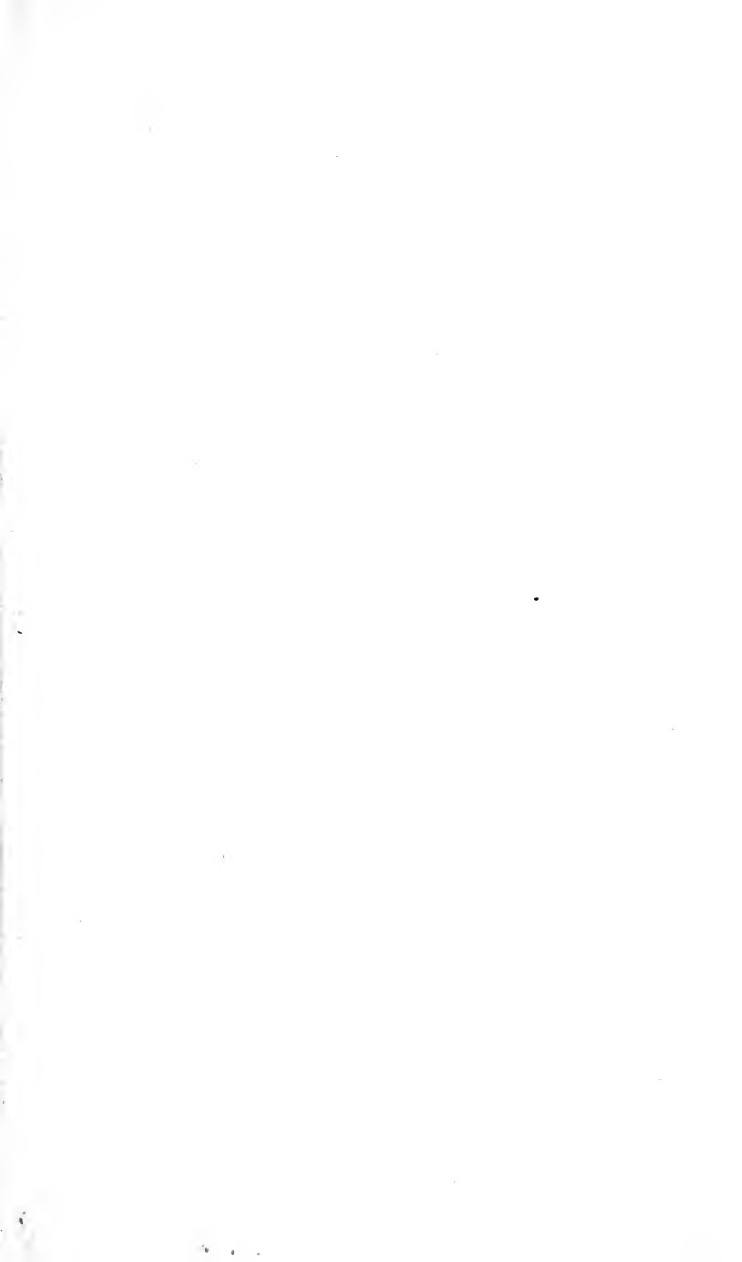
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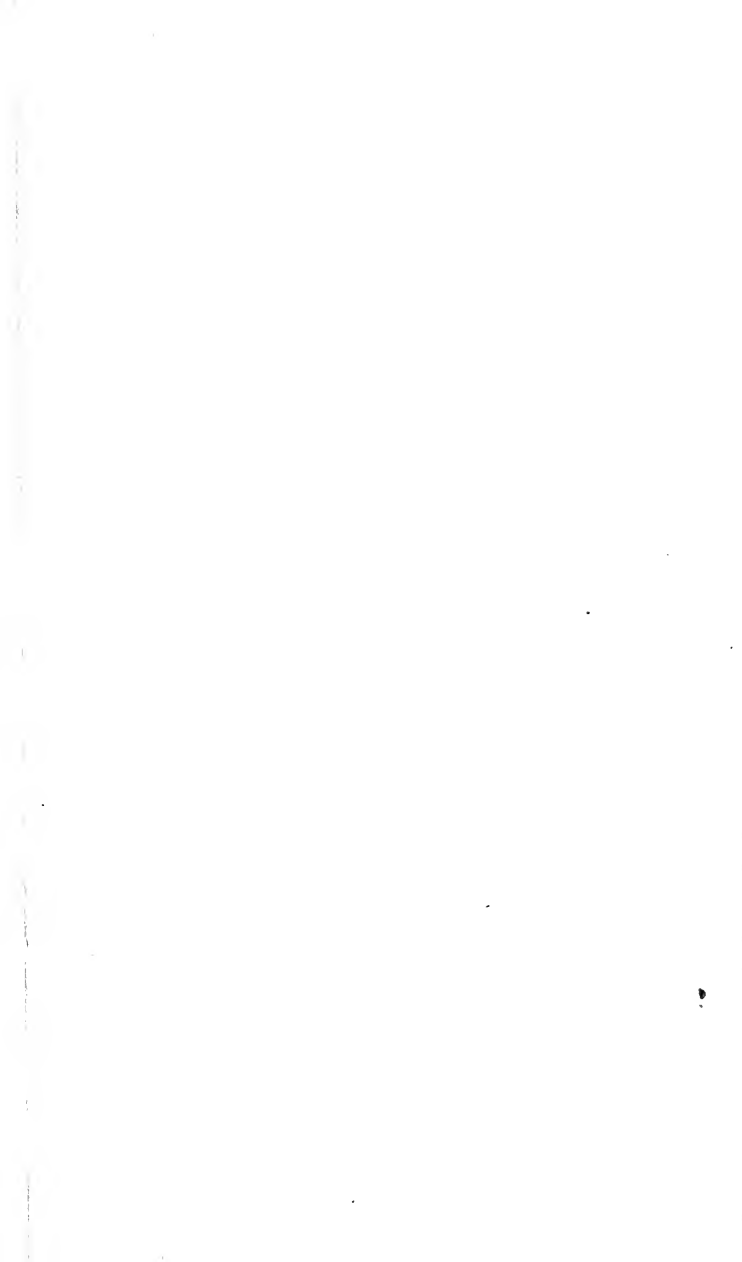
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